

# FINAL BILL REPORT

## HB 1416

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Synopsis as Enacted

**Brief Description:** Extending an asparagus exception to the standards for fruits and vegetables.

**Sponsors:** By Representatives Grant, Chandler, Linville, Newhouse, Warnick and VanDeWege.

**House Committee on Agriculture & Natural Resources**

**Senate Committee on Agriculture & Rural Economic Development**

**Background:**

The Fruit and Vegetable Inspection Program of the Department of Agriculture (Department) inspects fresh and processed produce such as apples, pears, cherries, peaches, asparagus, and potatoes. The produce is inspected according to uniform grading standards including maturity, size, soundness, shape, color, condition, and other factors important to marketing. The produce may also be certified as free from pests and diseases in order to meet domestic and international market requirements. The Fruit and Vegetable Inspection Program is self-supporting through fees-for-service.

The Director of the Department must adopt rules providing uniform grading standards for some fruits and vegetables, and may adopt rules providing uniform grading standards for others. Asparagus is one of the vegetables for which uniform grading standards are required.

In 2004 the Legislature approved a temporary exception to these mandatory standards for asparagus shipped out-of-state for fresh packing, and in 2005, approved a two year extension of the exception. This exception expires on December 31, 2007. With no grading standards, there are no inspections in Washington. Instead the inspections take place in the state in which the packing occurs.

**Summary:**

The exception to mandatory grading standards for asparagus shipped out-of-state for fresh packing is extended for two years and will expire on December 31, 2009.

**Votes on Final Passage:**

House	93	0
Senate	46	0

**Effective:** July 22, 2007