H-0090.1

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**HOUSE BILL 1268**

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**State of Washington 64th Legislature 2015 Regular Session**

**By** Representatives Buys, Lytton, Shea, Wilcox, Young, Holy, and McCaslin

AN ACT Relating to hemp as a component of commercial animal feed; creating new sections; and providing an expiration date.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  (1) The legislature finds that hemp seed is known globally for its high levels of essential fatty acids, such as omega-3, omega-6, omega-9, and gamma-linolenic acid, as well as for its high levels of amino acid-containing protein.

(2) The legislature further finds that international research suggests that hemp seed is an excellent source of nutrition for the major classes of livestock, including cattle, swine, and poultry. This research suggests that hemp is a valuable source of protein, energy, and long-chain fatty acids in animals and, when included into an animal's diet, has no adverse effect on production or health. Research also shows that, when hemp seed meal is included in the feed of laying hens, the omega fatty acid profile in the resulting eggs is favorably influenced.

(3) The legislature further finds that local, state-based markets exist in which consumers are willing to pay a premium price for products that result from hemp-fed animals. The state should aid its farmers and ranchers in accessing this price premium as a small, but important, step towards helping small scale agriculture remain viable and towards maintaining Washington's agricultural way of life.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  (1) The department of agriculture must conduct a study evaluating whether hemp and hemp products should be an allowable component of commercial feed in Washington. In conducting the evaluation, the department of agriculture may focus its efforts as it deems most appropriate and may limit its scope to particular classes of animals where current research indicates that hemp may have the most benefit on the health of the animal, the welfare of the animal, the resulting product, or the overall physical environment.

(2) If the department of agriculture determines that allowing some use of hemp in commercial feed is appropriate, then the department must take the appropriate administrative actions to allow for commercial feed license holders to include hemp in their feed formulations. If not, the department must provide a report to the legislature, consistent with RCW 43.01.036, explaining the department's findings and reasons for not taking administrative action.

(3) If the department of agriculture finds that it cannot satisfy the requirements of this section prior to the expiration date of this section, then the department must bring agency request legislation in the regularly scheduled 2018 legislative session to request an extension of this date.

(4) This section expires June 30, 2018.

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