

113TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. RES. 182

Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that specialty crops are a vital part of agriculture in the United States, that the Committee on Agriculture should propose funding for programs that support specialty crops priorities, and that legislation should be passed that includes funding reflecting specialty crops as a growing and important part of United States agriculture.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

APRIL 25, 2013

Ms. DELBENE (for herself, Mr. VARGAS, Mr. DEFazio, Mr. BENISHEK, Mr. HASTINGS of Washington, Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York, Ms. KUSTER, Mr. SCHRADER, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. GARAMENDI, and Mr. REICHERT) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Agriculture

RESOLUTION

Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that specialty crops are a vital part of agriculture in the United States, that the Committee on Agriculture should propose funding for programs that support specialty crops priorities, and that legislation should be passed that includes funding reflecting specialty crops as a growing and important part of United States agriculture.

Whereas specialty crops are defined as fruits and vegetables, tree nuts, dried fruits, horticulture, and nursery crops including floriculture;

Whereas farmers in the United States grow more than 350 types of fruit, vegetable, tree nut, flower, nursery, and other horticultural crops;

Whereas the yearly value of specialty crop production totals more than \$50,000,000,000 which accounts for about half of all domestic crop value;

Whereas specialty crops represent more than $\frac{1}{3}$ of the value of United States crop production in a given year;

Whereas sales of fresh and processed fruits and vegetables total nearly \$100,000,000,000 annually;

Whereas combined exports of specialty crops grown in the United States totaled nearly \$15,900,000,000 as recently as 2010, which accounts for about 15 percent of all agricultural exports from the United States;

Whereas there are about 248,000 farms that grow a variety of specialty crops, and every single State has at least some specialty crop production;

Whereas overall spending on specialty crops remains a small percentage of all funding for crops, even taking into account mandatory and discretionary funding combined;

Whereas specialty crops are not eligible for many of the traditional support programs that benefit producers of other crops;

Whereas programs that support specialty crops are generally available to all crops, while the opposite is true of specific commodity crops;

Whereas fruits and vegetables like red raspberries, almonds, apples, apricots, avocados, bananas, beans, blueberries, citrus, cherries, cranberries, figs, grapes, macadamia nuts, nectarines, onions, papayas, peaches, pecans, pep-

pers, plums, potatoes, pumpkins, sweet corn, certain tomatoes, walnuts, asparagus, beets, strawberries, broccoli, and carrots are just a few of the hundreds of specialty crops grown in the United States;

Whereas specialty crops are a driving force in promoting a healthier country and are part of a healthy, balanced diet that can help consumers reach recommended dietary goals, which call for half of plates to be fruits and vegetables;

Whereas the authorities in the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 8701 et seq.) that expired on September 30, 2012, were extended under the American Taxpayer Relief Act of 2012 (Public Law 112–240) until September 30, 2013;

Whereas many agriculture programs did not receive any additional mandatory funding under that extension;

Whereas a vital program for specialty crops, the specialty crop research initiative, established under section 412 of the Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act of 1998 (7 U.S.C. 7632), did not receive any additional mandatory funding under that extension;

Whereas a vital program for specialty crops, the national clean plant network, established under section 10202 of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 7761), did not receive any additional mandatory funding under that extension;

Whereas it is paramount that the House of Representatives passes a new 5-year farm bill to reauthorize agriculture programs without funding in fiscal year 2013, to provide funding for such programs in fiscal year 2014 and fiscal

years thereafter, and to provide certainty to farmers across the United States;

Whereas the number of farms producing and sales of fruits, berries, and tree nuts in the United States is steadily increasing;

Whereas according to the most recent census data published by the Census of Agriculture in 2007, 112,690 farms produced fruits, tree nuts, and berries with a total value of \$18,600,000,000, an increase of \$4,900,000,000 in 5 years;

Whereas the Census shows an increase in the value of sales for vegetables, potatoes and melons from \$12,800,000,000 in 2002 to \$14,700,000,000 in 2007, an increase of 15 percent;

Whereas nursery, greenhouse, floriculture, and sod sales increased 13 percent from 2002 and 2007, from \$14,700,000,000 to \$16,600,000,000;

Whereas it is evident that specialty crops are an increasingly important part of agriculture in the United States; and

Whereas specialty crops should get their fair share of consideration and funding in agriculture generally, but especially in the farm bill: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That it is the sense of the House of Rep-
2 resentatives that—

3 (1) specialty crops are a vital part of agri-
4 culture in the United States;

5 (2) the Committee on Agriculture should pro-
6 pose funding for programs that support specialty
7 crops priorities; and

- 1 (3) legislation should be passed that includes
- 2 funding reflecting specialty crops as a growing and
- 3 important part of United States agriculture.

