

CONCURRENCE IN SENATE AMENDMENTS

AB 2685 (Committee on Agriculture)

As Amended June 2, 2026

Majority vote

SUMMARY

Requires the Secretary of the Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) to make the "Annual Report on Price Posting for Processing Strawberries" publicly available on CDFA's internet website, in lieu of a report to the Legislature.

Senate Amendments

Expands the authority of the California Walnut Commission to include recommending walnut quality standards and product labeling requirements to the Secretary. The amendments further specify that they shall not take effect or be acted upon until the beginning of next marketing season after a public announcement is made.

COMMENTS

Under the status quo, the California Walnut Board (Board) and the California Walnut Commission (Commission) work in parallel. The Board is federal marketing order, created in 1948 that conducts research into production, post-harvest, marketing and economics. The Board also establishes grades and standards and controls volumes and reserves to help stabilize market prices.

The Commission was established in 1987, under the California Marketing Act for the purpose of conducting health research and expanding export markets. The primary impetus was the creation of a federal program, in 1985, that provided funds to targeted commodities to assist in their advertising and marketing efforts. Prior to the creation of the Commission, walnuts were unable to advertise and market. In 1990, the United States exported around 70,000 MT of walnuts, by 2011, that number had climbed to around 200,000 MT, but has since plateaued.

Federal, and State, Marketing orders require all growers of the commodity to pay for program activities through an assessment, which is voted on and re-authorized by those same growers.

According to the Author

Regarding Strawberries: "This bill will help streamline the annual strawberry report, make the report available to a wider range of constituents."

Regarding Walnuts: "In the past 20 years, Chinese walnuts have come to dominate the world marketplace, producing almost twice as many nuts, 1.4 million MT, as the U.S, 750,000 MT (California accounts for 99% of U.S. production). In response, the Commission would like to explore the option of setting grades and labeling requirements to distinguish the California brand from others in the world marketplace. Walnut growers could pursue similar changes through the Board, but that is a more laborious process that requires the review and approval of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and has thus far proved to be a very byzantine and unfruitful path forward.

[This bill] would provide the walnut growers of California a more streamlined and direct path toward protecting the integrity of the California brand. Any changes would be voted on, and paid for, by growers."

Arguments in Support

None on file.

Arguments in Opposition

None on file.

FISCAL COMMENTS

According to the Senate Appropriations Committee, pursuant to Senate Rule 28.8, this bill will have negligible state costs.

VOTES:

ASM AGRICULTURE: 8-0-0

YES: Soria, Hadwick, Aguiar-Curry, Alanis, Connolly, Jeff Gonzalez, Irwin, Ransom

ASM APPROPRIATIONS: 14-0-1

YES: Wicks, Hoover, Arambula, Caloza, Dixon, Fong, Mark González, Krell, Muratsuchi, Pacheco, Pellerin, Solache, Ta, Tangipa

ABS, ABST OR NV: Calderon

ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 68-0-12

YES: Addis, Aguiar-Curry, Ahrens, Alanis, Alvarez, Ávila Farías, Bains, Bauer-Kahan, Bennett, Boerner, Bryan, Calderon, Caloza, Carrillo, Castillo, Chen, Connolly, Davies, DeMaio, Elhawary, Ellis, Fong, Gabriel, Gallagher, Garcia, Gipson, Jeff Gonzalez, Mark González, Hadwick, Haney, Jackson, Johnson, Kalra, Krell, Lackey, Lee, Lowenthal, Macedo, McKinnor, Muratsuchi, Nguyen, Ortega, Pacheco, Patel, Patterson, Pellerin, Petrie-Norris, Quirk-Silva, Ramos, Ransom, Michelle Rodriguez, Rogers, Blanca Rubio, Sanchez, Schultz, Sharp-Collins, Solache, Soria, Stefani, Ta, Tangipa, Valencia, Wallis, Ward, Wicks, Wilson, Zbur, Rivas

ABS, ABST OR NV: Arambula, Berman, Bonta, Dixon, Flora, Harabedian, Hart, Hoover, Irwin, Papan, Celeste Rodriguez, Schiavo

SENATE FLOOR: 39-0-1

YES: Allen, Archuleta, Arreguín, Ashby, Becker, Blakespear, Cabaldon, Caballero, Cervantes, Choi, Cortese, Dahle, Durazo, Gonzalez, Grayson, Grove, Hurtado, Jones, Laird, Limón, McGuire, McNerney, Menjivar, Niello, Ochoa Bogh, Padilla, Pérez, Reyes, Richardson, Rubio, Seyarto, Smallwood-Cuevas, Stern, Strickland, Umberg, Valladares, Wahab, Weber Pierson, Wiener

ABS, ABST OR NV: Alvarado-Gil

UPDATED

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