

Specialty Crop Farm Bill Alliance
Working to Make American Agriculture Stronger

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**Senate Finance Committee Actions Clear Way for Senate
Agriculture Committee to Address Specialty Crop
Priorities
36 Senators Signed Letter To Double Funding**

WASHINGTON, D.C. - The Specialty Crop Farm Bill Alliance (SCFBA), a national coalition of more than 120 specialty crop organizations representing 350 individual specialty crops, applauds the Senate Finance Committee's actions to provide more than \$8 billion in new funding for overall farm bill priorities including conservation and disaster assistance. Addressing those priorities outside the baseline funding provided to the Senate Agriculture Committee will allow that committee to address many important priorities for specialty crop producers.

Recently, 36 Senators signed a letter spearheaded by Senator Debbie Stabenow (D-MI) to double the \$1.6 billion in funding for specialty crops provided in the House-passed farm bill. In correspondence sent to the Chairman and Ranking Member of the Senate Agriculture Committee, the Senators indicated that the *"treatment of specialty crops will be an important factor"* in their support for supporting the Farm Bill on the Senate floor. Specialty crops include the nation's fruits, vegetables, potatoes and nuts and account for nearly half of all cash crop receipts in America making them an integral component of the agricultural economy. Specialty crop producers do not receive nor have they advocated for direct payments or subsidies from the federal government.

The SCFBA issued the following statement:

"Specialty crop producers are seeking a Farm Bill that is more equitable for the industry. The fact that 36 Senators - more than

a third of the Senate - are urging a significant increase in funding indicates the broad based support for specialty crops. Now that the Senate Finance Committee has taken action, we are hoping the Senate Agriculture Committee will address our priorities based on the enhanced funding outlined today."

Priorities of Specialty Crop Producers

- Expansion of the USDA Fruit & Vegetable Snack Program to all 50 states. The program and others involving healthy foods and community projects help develop life long health through consumption of fruits and vegetables
- Greater investment in research to improve the taste and quality of foods
- Expansion of the State Specialty Crop Competitiveness Projects to all 50 states based on a proven track record of delivering results for specific local needs
- Enhanced critical trade assistance and market promotion tools that will grow international markets for specialty crops
- Investment in prevention and mitigation protocols to combat invasive pest and diseases, which cost the economy millions of dollars per year
- Expansion and improvement of conservation programs to allow producers of specialty crops increased access to conservation assistance

List of Senators Who Signed Letter

Sen. Debbie Stabenow (D-MI)
Sen. Carl Levin (D-MI)
Sen. Barbara Boxer (D-CA)
Sen. Dianne Feinstein (D-CA)
Sen. Patty Murray (D-WA)
Sen. Pete V. Domenici (R-NM)\
Sen. Jeff Bingaman (D-NM)
Sen. Robert P. Casey, Jr. (D-PA)
Sen. Frank R. Lautenberg (D-NJ)
Sen. Sherrod Brown (D-OH)
Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-NY)
Sen. Charles E. Schumer (D-NY)
Sen. Robert Menendez (D-NJ)

Sen. Benjamin L. Cardin (D-MD)
Sen. Bill Nelson (D-FL)
Sen. Mel Martinez (R-FL)
Sen. Arlen Specter (R-PA)
Sen. Richard Burr (R-NC)
Sen. Elizabeth Dole (R-NC)
Sen. Mike Crapo (R-ID)
Sen. Larry E. Craig (R-ID)
Sen. Joseph Lieberman (I-CT)
Sen. Christopher J. Dodd (D-CT)
Sen. Jack Reed (D-RI)
Sen. Daniel K. Inouye (D-HI)
Sen. Daniel K. Akaka (D-HI)
Sen. Thomas R. Carper (D-DE)
Sen. John Warner (R-VA)
Sen. Edward Kennedy (D-MA)
Sen. John F. Kerry (D-MA)
Sen. Susan M. Collins (R-ME)
Sen. Olympia J. Snowe (R-ME)
Sen. Joe R. Biden, Jr. (D-DE)
Sen. Maria Cantwell (D-WA)
Sen. Ron Wyden (D-OR)
Sen. Gordon H. Smith (R-OR)