

1 TO THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES:

2 The Committee on Agriculture, Food Resiliency, and Forestry to which was  
3 referred House Bill No. 813 entitled “An act relating to establishing the Tree  
4 Fruit Farmer Assistance Program” respectfully reports that it has considered  
5 the same and recommends that the bill be amended by striking out all after the  
6 enacting clause and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

7 Sec. 1. **FRUIT** FARMER ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

8 (a)(1) The Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets shall establish the  
9 **Fruit** Farmer Assistance Program consistent with the requirements of this  
10 section.

11 (2) “Fruit” means the harvestable or harvested part of a plant developed  
12 from a flower. “Fruit” includes all perennial and annual fruit, such as apples,  
13 berries, grapes, pears, cherries, and peaches. “Fruit” shall not include plants  
14 commonly classified as a vegetable.

15 (b) A farm in the State that grows **fruit** is eligible for assistance under this  
16 section if:

17 (1) the farm is currently operating and producing **fruit**;

18 (2) the farm suffered production losses in calendar year 2023 due to  
19 freezing or frost conditions;

20 (3) the farm is in good standing with the Agency of Agriculture, Food  
21 and Markets; and

1           (4) the farm submits an application for assistance to the Agency of  
2           Agriculture, Food and Markets by a date specified by the Secretary of  
3           Agriculture, Food and Markets.

4           (c)(1) The Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets shall provide  
5           financial assistance to farms producing fruit in the State in the form of an  
6           award to provide relief for losses in calendar year 2023 due to freezing or frost  
7           conditions.

8           (2) The Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets shall develop a  
9           formula for calculation of an award under this section. The formula shall  
10           incorporate:

11           (A) the self-certified total production losses of a farm in calendar  
12           year 2023;

13           (B) a maximum award amount of 20 percent of a farm's production  
14           losses to the amount of ?; and

15           (C) a reduction in the maximum amount of the award per farm so that  
16           the award does not exceed the total of uncovered losses at the farm.

17           (d) The Agency shall process applications for an award in the order  
18           applications are received. If all funds appropriated for implementation of this  
19           section are awarded by the Agency, no further awards shall be made. If any  
20           funds appropriated for implementation of this section remain after all timely  
21           applications are processed, the remaining funds shall be transferred to the

1 Working Lands Enterprise Fund not later than December 31, 2024 for award  
2 by the Working Lands Enterprise Board under the Small Farmer  
3 Diversification and Transition Program.

4 Sec. 2. APPROPRIATION; TREE FRUIT FARMER ASSISTANCE  
5 PROGRAM

6 In addition to other funds appropriated in fiscal year 2025, \$2,000,000.00 is  
7 appropriated from the General Fund to the Agency of Agriculture, Food and  
8 Markets to implement the Tree Fruit Farmer Assistance Program established  
9 pursuant to Sec. 1 of this act.

10 Sec. 3. EFFECTIVE DATE

11 This act shall take effect on passage.  
12 and that after passage the title of the bill be amended to read: “An act  
13 relating to establishing the Fruit Farmer Assistance Program”

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(Committee vote: \_\_\_\_\_)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Representative \_\_\_\_\_  
FOR THE COMMITTEE