

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 all perennial grape, berry, stone fruit, and pome fruit  
12 crops.

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

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

16 (2) the farm suffered production losses in May of 2023 due to freezing  
17 or frost conditions;

18 (3) the farm is in good standing with the Agency of Agriculture, Food  
19 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 production losses in calendar year 2023 due to  
7           freezing or frost 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 farm’s self-certified total raw fruit production losses in  
12          calendar year 2023;

13           (B) a maximum award amount of 20 percent of a farm’s raw fruit  
14          production losses up to a maximum amount of \$20,000.00; 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 production 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; FRUIT FARMER ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

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

9 Sec. 3. EFFECTIVE DATE

10 This act shall take effect on passage.

11 and that after passage the title of the bill be amended to read: “An act  
12 relating to establishing the Fruit Farmer Assistance Program”

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

18 \_\_\_\_\_  
19 Representative \_\_\_\_\_

20 FOR THE COMMITTEE