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Specialty Crops Industry Commends Senate for Passing Farm Bill

Leaders in Both Chambers Urged to Move Quickly on Conference Committee

WASHINGTON, D.C – The [Specialty Crop Farm Bill Alliance](http://www.farbillalliance.org) (SCFBA), representing over 120 specialty crop organizations across the United States, has released the following statement after the passage of the farm bill in the U.S. Senate by a vote of 86 to 11:

The Specialty Crop Farm Bill Alliance applauds the bipartisan efforts of Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, Minority Leader Chuck Schumer, Agriculture Committee Chairman Pat Roberts, Ranking Member Debbie Stabenow, and members of the Senate in passing the Agriculture Improvement Act. The Alliance strongly supports the inclusion of a new research program for citrus producers, increased funds for nutrition programs and the extension of many of the specialty crop provisions that were included in the 2014 Farm Bill, such as:

- Specialty Crop Block Grants (\$85 million/year)
- Specialty Crop Research Initiative (\$80 million/year)
- Trade Programs including Market Access Program (\$200 million/year) and Technical Assistance for Specialty Crops (\$9 million/year)
- Pest and Disease Programs (\$75 million/year) and National Clean Plant Network (\$5 million/year)
- Food Insecurity and Nutrition Incentive Program (Increased to \$250 million over five years)
- Emergency Citrus Disease Research and Development Trust Fund (\$125 million over five years)

“Chairman Roberts and Ranking Member Stabenow’s work over the past year produced a Farm Bill that is clearly committed to investing in specialty crop agriculture. Our coalition appreciates the value of these programs in supporting our industry and delivering nutritious specialty crops to consumers. Looking forward, we encourage leadership in both chambers to convene a conference committee in an expeditious manner. For agriculture and the jobs it creates, it’s critical that Congress completes its work before the current farm bill expires on Sept. 30. Our industry stands ready to work with members of the conference committee to ensure a bill that will help specialty crop agriculture stay strong and competitive.”

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*The **Specialty Crop Farm Bill Alliance** is a national coalition of more than 120 organizations representing growers of fruits, vegetables, dried fruit, tree nuts, nursery plants and other products. The Alliance was established to enhance the competitiveness of specialty crop agriculture and improve the health of Americans by broadening the scope of U.S. agricultural public policy. For more information, visit <http://www.farbillalliance.org>.*