

.....
(Original Signature of Member)

118TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. _____

To amend the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946 to direct the Secretary of Agriculture to establish a program under which the Secretary will award grants to specialty crop producers to acquire certain equipment and provide training with respect to the use of such equipment

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. VALADAO introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on _____

A BILL

To amend the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946 to direct the Secretary of Agriculture to establish a program under which the Secretary will award grants to specialty crop producers to acquire certain equipment and provide training with respect to the use of such equipment

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

1 **SECTION 1. AUTOMATION AND MECHANIZATION GRANTS**
2 **FOR SPECIALTY CROPS PRODUCERS.**

3 Subtitle A of the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946
4 (7 U.S.C. 1621 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end
5 the following:

6 **“SEC. 210B. AUTOMATION AND MECHANIZATION GRANTS.**

7 “(a) IN GENERAL.—For purposes of enhancing the
8 competitiveness of specialty crop producers in the United
9 States, the Secretary of Agriculture, acting through the
10 Administrator of the Agricultural Marketing Service, shall
11 establish a program under which the Secretary will award
12 grants to eligible entities to acquire certain equipment and
13 provide training with respect to the use of such equipment.

14 “(b) USE OF FUNDS.—An eligible entity receiving a
15 grant under this section shall use funds received through
16 the grant—

17 “(1) to acquire mechanized or automated sys-
18 tems and tools that increase the efficiency of a task
19 or reduce human labor for a specific activity, as de-
20 termined by the Secretary; and

21 “(2) to provide training, including worker train-
22 ing, and other professional services required to learn
23 how to deploy and effectively operate such systems
24 and tools , as determined by the Secretary.

25 “(c) AMOUNT OF GRANTS.—To the maximum extent
26 practicable, the Secretary shall seek to ensure that the

1 amount of a grant awarded to a single eligible entity is
2 sufficient to provide a significant offset to the costs such
3 eligible entity incurs in carrying out the activities specified
4 in subsection (b).

5 “(d) MATCHING FUNDS REQUIREMENT.—The recipi-
6 ent of a grant under this section shall provide non-Federal
7 matching funds equal to not less than 50 percent of the
8 amount of the grant.

9 “(e) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

10 “(1) MECHANIZED OR AUTOMATED SYSTEMS
11 AND TOOLS.—The term ‘mechanized or automated
12 systems and tools’ includes—

13 “(A) low dust harvesting tools and equip-
14 ment;

15 “(B) grinding and chipping tools and
16 equipment;

17 “(C) sorting machines,;

18 “(D) phytosanitary, infrared, and pasteur-
19 ization tools and equipment;

20 “(E) traceability tools and equipment;

21 “(F) storage and warehousing tools and
22 equipment;

23 “(G) drones for monitoring commodity
24 piles and feedstuff for cattle;

25 “(H) hedgers or shredders;

1 “(I) wireless, networks, and connectivity
2 equipment to support IoT devices;

3 “(J) remote, mobile, or drone sensing sen-
4 sors for field level monitoring of environmental
5 variables for use in farm production and/or
6 processing management decision making;

7 “(K) enhanced precision irrigation automa-
8 tion, remote sensing, and metering, pest and
9 disease detection, nutrient analysis, and crop
10 load assessment equipment and tools;

11 “(L) crop monitoring and analytics equip-
12 ment and tools;

13 “(M) potential and predictive near-infrared
14 crop damaged assessments;

15 “(N) robotic, semi-autonomous, autono-
16 mous or mechanized systems or other tools;

17 “(O) equipment and tools that automate or
18 mechanize seeding, weeding, harvesting, pack-
19 ing (field and in-house), pruning, spraying,
20 transporting, climate protection (such as shade
21 cloth or light manipulation);

22 “(P) such other automated or mechanized
23 systems or tools that increase efficiency as de-
24 termined by the Secretary.

1 “(2) ELIGIBLE ENTITY.—The term ‘eligible en-
2 tity’ means an individual or entity engaged in the
3 commercial production of specialty crops in the
4 United States. ”.