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## **Specialty Crops Industry Applauds Senate Farm Bill Approach**

*Senate Farm Bill includes support for specialty crop programs*

**WASHINGTON, D.C** – The [Specialty Crop Farm Bill Alliance](#) (SCFBA), representing over 120 specialty crop organizations across the United States, has released the following statement following the U.S. Senate Agriculture Committee’s introduction of the farm bill:

The Specialty Crop Farm Bill Alliance applauds the efforts of Chairman Pat Roberts and Ranking Member Debbie Stabenow along with the members of the Senate Agriculture Committee in drafting the Senate 2018 Farm Bill, the Agriculture Improvement Act. This legislation clearly reflects the growing importance of the specialty crop industry in American agriculture. The Alliance is particularly pleased to see the inclusion of a new program for citrus producers, increased funds for nutrition programs as well as 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 MAP (\$200 million/year) and TASC (\$9 million/year)
- Pest and Disease Programs (\$75 million/year) and National Clean Plant Network (\$5 million/year)
- Food Insecurity and Nutrition Incentive Program (FINI) (Increased to \$250 million over five years)
- Emergency Citrus Disease Research and Development Trust Fund (\$125 million over five years)

The SCFBA further stated, “The Alliance is grateful for the inclusion of these programs in the Senate legislation. These funding commitments demonstrate that the Senate recognizes the value of these programs and their tremendous importance to the specialty crop industry and consumers. The Alliance also appreciates the collaboration from the Senate Agriculture Committee members that took place to develop such a strong, bipartisan bill. We will continue to work with industry allies in Congress to ensure the program’s original mission of promoting fresh fruits and vegetables is sustained in the 2018 Farm Bill.”

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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.farmbillalliance.org>.*