

(KEYWORD, SUMMARY, AND DIGEST as amended by Senate committee amendments)

AGRICULTURE/SWEET POTATO. Provides relative to the sweet potato industry

DIGEST

Proposed law creates the sweet potato dealer's permit and requires any person, including sweet potato growers and farmers, who commercially grow, sell, or offer sweet potatoes for sale to possess a sweet potato dealer's permit.

Proposed law requires applicants for a sweet potato dealer's permit to complete and file an application as required by the La. Dept. of Agriculture and Forestry (department), which sets forth the following conditions:

- (1) A guarantee to reimburse the purchase price for any sweet potatoes confiscated due to sweet potato weevil infestation or unauthorized sale.
- (2) An agreement to permit, at the dealer's cost, the disposal by the department or return to the point of origin any sweet potatoes sold without authorization or infested with sweet potato weevils.
- (3) A signed agreement to comply with all sweet potato quarantine regulations and specified conditions.

Proposed law does not apply to retail grocers and other retail outlets selling sweet potatoes possessing a valid inspection certificate permit or permit tag, and that are sold directly to the consumer from a permanent location.

Proposed law provides for the suspension, revocation, or probation of a sweet potato dealer's permit if the permit holder fails to comply with the provisions of proposed law or with a signed compliance agreement with the department.

Proposed law allows the department to refuse the renewal of a sweet potato dealer's permit if the permit holder owes unpaid sweet potato fees, taxes, or civil penalties.

Proposed law provides for the definition of "Certificate Permit", "Certificate Permit Tag", "Commissioner", "Department", "Processing plants", and "Sweet potato".

Proposed law authorizes the commissioner of agriculture to adopt rules and regulations deemed necessary to enforce the provisions of proposed law.

Present law requires that the proceeds of one cent of the four-cent per bushel tax collected each year be disbursed by the commissioner when authorized by a majority of the commission as follows:

- (1) One-fourth of the above amount to finance activities and services initiated by the Louisiana Sweet Potato Association as approved by a majority of the members of the commission.
- (2) Three-fourths of the above amount to the Louisiana Agricultural Experiment Station to finance sweet potato research work as approved by a majority of the members of the commission.

Proposed law specifies that not less than one cent and up to a maximum of two cents of the four-cent per bushel tax be disbursed by the commissioner and otherwise retains present law.

Proposed law redesignates present law as follows:

From R.S. 3:1731 to R.S. 3:1733.2

From R.S. 3:1732 to R.S. 3:1735

From R.S. 3:1733 to R.S. 3:1735.1

From R.S. 3:1734(A) to R.S. 3:1733

From R.S. 3:1734(B) to R.S. 3:1737(A)

From R.S. 3:1734(B)(4) to R.S. 3:1737(B)

From R.S. 3:1735 to R.S. 3:1734

(Amends R.S. 3:1731-1735 and 1736(A), (B), and (E); Adds R.S. 3:1733.1, 1733.2, 1735.1, 1737, and the headings for Parts III and III-A of Ch. 12 of Title 3 of the L.R.S. of 1950)

Summary of Amendments Adopted by House

House Floor Amendments to the engrossed bill.

1. Made technical changes.

Summary of Amendments Adopted by Senate

Committee Amendments Proposed by Senate Committee on Agriculture, Forestry, Aquaculture, and Rural Development to the reengrossed bill

1. Provides relative to the disbursement of the proceeds of sweet potato tax monies.