

118TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 5062

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

JULY 27, 2023

Mr. VALADAO (for himself, Mr. COSTA, Mr. PANETTA, and Mr. LAMALFA) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Agriculture

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,*

3 **SECTION 1. AUTOMATION AND MECHANIZATION GRANTS**

4 **FOR SPECIALTY CROPS PRODUCERS.**

5 Subtitle A of the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946
6 (7 U.S.C. 1621 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end
7 the following:

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

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

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

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

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

20 “(c) AMOUNT OF GRANTS.—To the maximum extent
21 practicable, the Secretary shall seek to ensure that the
22 amount of a grant awarded to a single eligible entity is
23 sufficient to provide a significant offset to the costs such
24 eligible entity incurs in carrying out the activities specified
25 in subsection (b).

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

5 “(e) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

6 “(1) MECHANIZED OR AUTOMATED SYSTEMS
7 AND TOOLS.—The term ‘mechanized or automated
8 systems and tools’ includes—

9 “(A) low dust harvesting tools and equip-
10 ment;

11 “(B) grinding and chipping tools and
12 equipment;

13 “(C) sorting machines,;

14 “(D) phytosanitary, infrared, and pasteur-
15 ization tools and equipment;

16 “(E) traceability tools and equipment;

17 “(F) storage and warehousing tools and
18 equipment;

19 “(G) drones for monitoring commodity
20 piles and feedstuff for cattle;

21 “(H) hedgers or shredders;

22 “(I) wireless, networks, and connectivity
23 equipment to support IoT devices;

24 “(J) remote, mobile, or drone sensing sen-
25 sors for field level monitoring of environmental

1 variables for use in farm production and/or
2 processing management decision making;

3 “(K) enhanced precision irrigation automa-
4 tion, remote sensing, and metering, pest and
5 disease detection, nutrient analysis, and crop
6 load assessment equipment and tools;

7 “(L) crop monitoring and analytics equip-
8 ment and tools;

9 “(M) potential and predictive near-infrared
10 crop damaged assessments;

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

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

18 “(P) such other automated or mechanized
19 systems or tools that increase efficiency as de-
20 termined by the Secretary.

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

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