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LEGISLATIVE ACTION

Senate

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House

The Committee on Rules (Truenow) recommended the following:

Senate Amendment (with title amendment)

Delete lines 1109 - 1397
and insert:

Section 32. Subsection (7) of section 573.112, Florida
Statutes, is amended to read:

573.112 Advisory council.—

(7) Notwithstanding any provision of this section, the
Citrus Research and Field Trial Development Foundation, Inc., a
direct-support organization of the Department of Agriculture and
Consumer Services ~~University of Florida~~ established pursuant to



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s. 570.691 ~~s. 1004.28~~, shall serve as the advisory council for a citrus research marketing order, provide the department with advice on administering the order, and, in accordance with the order, conduct citrus research and perform other duties assigned by the department. Notwithstanding s. 570.691 ~~s. 1004.28(3)~~ or any provision of this section, the foundation's board of directors shall be composed of the Florida State Plant Health Inspection Service Director and, appointed by the Commissioner of Agriculture, 7 members who are ~~13 members, including 10 citrus growers, 2 representatives of the university's Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences,~~ and 1 member who is a Florida citrus nursery representative. Members of the board of directors shall serve without compensation but ~~appointed by the Commissioner of Agriculture,~~ who are each entitled to reimbursement from the foundation for per diem and travel expenses as provided in s. 112.061.

Section 33. Subsection (32) of section 581.031, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

581.031 Department; powers and duties.—The department has the following powers and duties:

(32) To conduct or cause to be conducted research projects, including, but not limited to, citrus canker and citrus greening, which are recommended by the Citrus Research and Field Trial Development ~~Foundation~~, Inc., within the limits of appropriations made specifically for such purpose.

Section 34. Subsection (4) of section 583.01, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

583.01 Definitions.—For the purpose of this chapter, unless elsewhere indicated, the term:



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(4) "Dealer" means a person, firm, or corporation, including a producer, processor, retailer, or wholesaler, that sells, offers for sale, or holds for the purpose of sale in this state 30 dozen or more eggs or its equivalent in any one week, or more than 20,000 ~~384~~ dressed birds annually ~~in any one week~~.

Section 35. Section 590.02, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

590.02 Florida Forest Service; powers, authority, and duties; liability; building structures; Withlacoochee and Welaka Training Centers ~~Center~~.—

(1) The Florida Forest Service has the following powers, authority, and duties to:

(a) Enforce the provisions of this chapter;

(b) Prevent, detect, and suppress wildfires wherever they may occur on public or private land in this state and do all things necessary in the exercise of such powers, authority, and duties;

(c) Provide firefighting crews, who shall be under the control and direction of the Florida Forest Service and its designated agents;

(d) Appoint center managers, forest area supervisors, forestry program administrators, a forest protection bureau chief, a forest protection assistant bureau chief, a field operations bureau chief, deputy chiefs of field operations, district managers, forest operations administrators, senior forest rangers, investigators, forest rangers, firefighter rotorcraft pilots, and other employees who may, at the Florida Forest Service's discretion, be certified as forestry firefighters pursuant to s. 633.408(8). Other law



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notwithstanding, center managers, district managers, forest protection assistant bureau chief, and deputy chiefs of field operations have Selected Exempt Service status in the state personnel designation;

(e) Develop a training curriculum for wildland firefighters which must contain a minimum of 40 hours of structural firefighter training, a minimum of 40 hours of emergency medical training, and a minimum of 376 hours of wildfire training;

(f) Pay the cost of the initial commercial driver license examination fee, and renewal for those employees whose position requires them to operate equipment requiring a license. This paragraph is intended to be an authorization to the department to pay such costs, not an obligation;

(g) Provide fire management services and emergency response assistance and set and charge reasonable fees for performance of those services. Moneys collected from such fees shall be deposited into the Incidental Trust Fund of the Florida Forest Service;

(h) Require all state, regional, and local government agencies operating aircraft in the vicinity of an ongoing wildfire to operate in compliance with the applicable state Wildfire Aviation Plan;

(i) Authorize broadcast burning, prescribed burning, pile burning, and land clearing debris burning to carry out the duties of this chapter and the rules adopted thereunder; and

(j) Make rules to accomplish the purposes of this chapter.

(2) The Florida Forest Service's employees, and the firefighting crews under their control and direction, may enter upon any lands for the purpose of preventing, detecting, and



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99 suppressing wildfires and investigating smoke complaints or open
100 burning not in compliance with authorization and to enforce the
101 provisions of this chapter.

102 (3) Employees of the Florida Forest Service and of federal,
103 state, and local agencies, and all other persons and entities
104 that are under contract or agreement with the Florida Forest
105 Service to assist in firefighting operations as well as those
106 entities, called upon by the Florida Forest Service to assist in
107 firefighting may, in the performance of their duties, set
108 counterfires, remove fences and other obstacles, dig trenches,
109 cut firelines, use water from public and private sources, and
110 carry on all other customary activities in the fighting of
111 wildfires without incurring liability to any person or entity.
112 The manner in which the Florida Forest Service monitors a
113 smoldering wildfire or smoldering prescribed fire or fights any
114 wildfire are planning level activities for which sovereign
115 immunity applies and is not waived.

116 (4)(a) The department may build structures, notwithstanding
117 chapters 216 and 255, not to exceed a cost of \$50,000 per
118 structure from existing resources on forest lands, federal
119 excess property, and unneeded existing structures. These
120 structures must meet all applicable building codes.

121 (b) Notwithstanding s. 553.80(1), the department shall
122 exclusively enforce the Florida Building Code as it pertains to
123 wildfire, law enforcement, and other Florida Forest Service
124 facilities under the jurisdiction of the department.

125 (5) The Florida Forest Service shall organize its
126 operational units to most effectively prevent, detect, and
127 suppress wildfires, and to that end, may employ the necessary



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personnel to manage its activities in each unit. The Florida Forest Service may construct lookout towers, roads, bridges, firelines, and other facilities and may purchase or fabricate tools, supplies, and equipment for firefighting. The Florida Forest Service may reimburse the public and private entities that it engages to assist in the suppression of wildfires for their personnel and equipment, including aircraft.

(6) The Florida Forest Service shall undertake privatization alternatives for fire prevention activities including constructing fire lines and conducting prescribed burns and, where appropriate, entering into agreements or contracts with the private sector to perform such activities.

(7) The Florida Forest Service may organize, staff, equip, and operate the Withlacoochee and Welaka Training Centers ~~Center~~. The centers ~~center~~ shall serve as sites ~~a site~~ where fire and forest resource managers can obtain current knowledge, techniques, skills, and theory as they relate to their respective disciplines, and the centers:-

(a) ~~The center~~ May establish cooperative efforts involving federal, state, and local entities; hire appropriate personnel; and engage others by contract or agreement with or without compensation to assist in carrying out the training and operations of the centers ~~center~~.

(b) ~~The center~~ Shall provide wildfire suppression training opportunities for rural fire departments, volunteer fire departments, and other local fire response units.

(c) ~~The center~~ Shall focus on curriculum related to, but not limited to, fuel reduction, an incident management system, prescribed burning certification, multiple-use land management,



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water quality, forest health, environmental education, and wildfire suppression training for structural firefighters.

(d) ~~The center~~ May assess appropriate fees for food, lodging, travel, course materials, and supplies in order to meet their ~~its~~ operational costs and may grant free meals, room, and scholarships to persons and other entities as determined by the Florida Forest Service, regardless of whether training occurs at the Withlacoochee Training Center or Welaka Training Center or at another location in exchange for instructional assistance.

(8)(a) The Cross City Work Center shall be named the L. Earl Peterson Forestry Station. This is to honor Mr. L. Earl Peterson, Florida's sixth state forester, whose distinguished career in state government has spanned 44 years, and who is a native of Dixie County.

(b) The Madison Forestry Station shall be named the Harvey Greene Sr. Forestry Station. This is to honor Mr. Harvey Greene Sr., a World War I veteran and pioneer in forestry in Madison County. In 1947, Mr. Harvey Greene Sr. offered to give the land on which the forestry station is located to the state; however, at that time, the state could not accept donations of land. Instead, Mr. Harvey Greene Sr. sold the land to the state and, with the proceeds of the sale, purchased forestry equipment to be used by the citizens of Madison County to plant trees and fight wildfires.

(c) The Bonifay Forestry Station shall be named the John Michael Mathis Forestry Station. This is to honor the late Mr. John Michael Mathis, the Chipola Forestry Center manager whose distinguished career spanned 18 years, and who received many awards for his service, including commendation for leadership in



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wildfire mitigation for his service during Hurricane Michael.
Mr. John Michael Mathis was a proud husband, father, forester,
and friend.

(9)(a) Notwithstanding ss. 273.055 and 287.16, the department may retain, transfer, warehouse, bid, destroy, scrap, or otherwise dispose of surplus equipment and vehicles that are used for wildland firefighting.

(b) All money received from the disposition of state-owned equipment and vehicles that are used for wildland firefighting shall be retained by the department. Money received pursuant to this section is appropriated for and may be disbursed for the acquisition of exchange and surplus equipment used for wildland firefighting, and for all necessary operating expenditures related to such equipment, in the same fiscal year and the fiscal year following the disposition. The department shall maintain records of the accounts into which the money is deposited.

(10)(a) Notwithstanding the provisions of s. 252.38, the Florida Forest Service has exclusive authority to require and issue authorizations for broadcast burning and agricultural and silvicultural pile burning. An agency, commission, department, county, municipality, or other political subdivision of the state may not adopt or enforce laws, regulations, rules, or policies pertaining to broadcast burning or agricultural and silvicultural pile burning.

(b) The Florida Forest Service may delegate to a county, municipality, or special district its authority:

1. As delegated by the Department of Environmental Protection pursuant to ss. 403.061(29) and 403.081, to manage



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and enforce regulations pertaining to the burning of yard trash in accordance with s. 590.125(6).

2. To manage the open burning of land clearing debris in accordance with s. 590.125.

Section 36. Section 595.421, Florida Statutes, is created to read:

595.421 Farmers Feeding Florida Program.—There is established the Farmers Feeding Florida Program to coordinate with Feeding Florida, or its successor entity, for the acquisition, transportation, and distribution of non-Emergency Food Assistance Program fresh food products for the benefit of residents who are food insecure due to a lack of local food resources, accessibility, and affordability.

(1) In order to implement the program, Feeding Florida shall:

(a) Enter into an agreement with the department to provide, at a minimum, all of the following services:

1. Transportation of non-Emergency Food Assistance Program fresh food products using owned vehicles or contracted commercial vehicles.

2. Coordination of the purchase and pickup of food from the purchase location and delivery to the distribution location.

(b) Submit monthly reports to the department, beginning July 1, 2026, which include, at a minimum, all of the following:

1. A detailed record of the amount of food purchased, measured per pound and itemized according to its commodity type.

2. Food purchase locations.

3. Food purchase dates.

4. The date of delivery and locations to which the food was



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distributed.

(c) Submit quarterly reports, beginning July 1, 2026, to the chairs of the legislative appropriations committees, including all of the following information:

1. A detailed record of the amount of food distributed, measured per pound and itemized according to its commodity type.

2. The distribution locations.

3. An itemized list of the types of commodities distributed.

(2) Foods purchased by Feeding Florida through the program are restricted to charitable purposes for hunger relief and may not reenter the wholesale, retail, or secondary market.

(3) Feeding Florida may not, in implementing this section, allow a candidate for elective office to host a food distribution event during the period of time between the last day of the election qualifying period and the date of the election if the candidate is opposed for election or reelection at the time of the event. This subsection does not apply if the event is in response to a declared state of emergency.

Section 37. Present paragraph (c) of subsection (7) of section 597.004, Florida Statutes, is redesignated as paragraph (d) and amended, a new paragraph (c) is added to that subsection, and paragraph (a) of subsection (2) of that section is amended, to read:

597.004 Aquaculture certificate of registration.—

(2) RULES.—

(a) The department, in consultation with the Department of Environmental Protection, the water management districts, environmental groups, and representatives from the affected



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farming groups, shall adopt rules to:

1. Specify the requirement of best management practices to be implemented by holders of aquaculture certificates of registration.

2. Establish procedures for holders of aquaculture certificates of registration to submit the notice of intent to comply with best management practices.

3. Establish schedules for implementation of best management practices, and of interim measures that can be taken prior to adoption of best management practices. Interim measures may include the continuation of regulatory requirements in effect on June 30, 1998.

4. Establish a system to assure the implementation of best management practices, including recordkeeping requirements.

5. Require any facility that cultures *Micropterus salmoides floridanus* to maintain stock acquisition documentation or records of genetic testing.

(7) REGISTRATION AND RENEWALS.—

(c) The department may not renew a certificate of registration for a facility that is not compliant with this section unless documentation of corrective action is provided with the renewal application.

(d)(e) A Any person whose certificate of registration has been revoked or suspended must reapply to the department for certification. A person, a company, or an entity, or a principal of a company or an entity whose certificate of registration has been revoked, may not reapply for a period of 3 years.

Section 38. Paragraph (a) of subsection (5) of section 597.010, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:



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597.010 Shellfish regulation; leases.—

(5) LEASES IN PERPETUITY; RENT.—

(a) All leases issued previously under ~~the provisions of s.~~ 379.2525 shall be enforced under the authority of this chapter, notwithstanding any other law to the contrary, and shall continue in perpetuity under such restrictions as stated in the lease agreement. The annual rental fee charged for all leases shall consist of the minimum rate of \$15 per acre, or any fraction of an acre, per year and may ~~shall~~ be adjusted on January 1, 1995, and every 5 years thereafter, based on the 5-year average change in the Consumer Price Index. Rent must ~~shall~~ be paid in advance of January 1 of each year or, in the case of a new lease, at the time of signing, regardless of who holds the lease.

Section 39. Paragraphs (b) and (c) of subsection (1) of section 599.012, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

599.012 Florida Wine Trust Fund; creation.—

(1) There is established the Florida Wine Trust Fund within the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services. The department shall use the moneys deposited in the trust fund pursuant to subsection (2) to do all the following:

(b) Promote wine ~~viticulture~~ products manufactured from products grown in the state.

(c) Provide grants for wine and viticultural research.

Section 40. Subsection (3) of section 601.13, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

601.13 Citrus research; administration by Department of Citrus; appropriation.—

(3) An entity that solicits research proposals and awards



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funding for those proposals expending funds received from the State Treasury on citrus production research conducted pursuant to chapter 573, as recommended by the Citrus Research and Field Trial Development Foundation, Inc., or conducted through contract with the department shall deliver a report that includes all of the following information to the commission biannually and at the request of the commission:

- (a) Project plans selected for funding.
- (b) The financial status of the projects.
- (c) Current findings of the funded research.
- (d) Availability of citrus products or application of growers' practices found through funded research.
- (e) The status of the commercialization process of such products or practices.

Section 41. (1) The Citrus Research and Development Foundation, Inc., the nonprofit corporation established in s. 573.112(7), Florida Statutes, is merged into the Citrus Research and Field Trial Foundation, Inc.

(2) The Citrus Research and Development Foundation, Inc., must enter into a plan with the Citrus Research and Field Trial Foundation, Inc., for the merger. Such merger must be completed by October 1, 2026. The merger is subject to chapter 617, Florida Statutes, related to the merger of nonprofit corporations.

(3) Any funds held in trust which were donated to or earned by the Citrus Research and Development Foundation, Inc., shall be transferred to the Citrus Research and Field Trial Foundation, Inc., and shall be used for the original purposes of the funds.



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(4) The transfer of any program, activity, duty, or function under this act includes the transfer of any records and unexpected balances of appropriations, allocations, or other funds related to such program, activity, duty, or function. Except as otherwise provided by law, the Citrus Research and Field Trial Foundation, Inc., shall become the custodian of any property of the Citrus Research and Development Foundation, Inc., on the date specified in the plan of merger or October 1, 2026, whichever occurs first.

===== T I T L E A M E N D M E N T =====

And the title is amended as follows:

Delete lines 138 - 169

and insert:

s. 573.112, F.S.; renaming the Citrus Research and Development Foundation, Inc., as the Citrus Research and Field Trial Foundation, Inc.; establishing the Citrus Research and Field Trial Foundation, Inc., as a direct-support organization of the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services; revising provisions relating to the membership; amending s. 581.031, F.S.; conforming a provision to changes made by the act; amending s. 583.01, F.S.; revising the definition of the term "dealer"; amending s. 590.02, F.S.; revising the Florida Forest Service's powers, authority, and duties; authorizing the Florida Forest Service to manage the Welaka Training Center; conforming provisions to changes made by the act; authorizing the Withlacoochee and Welaka Training Centers to assess



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certain fees as determined by the Florida Forest Service, regardless of where certain training occurs; renaming the Bonifay Forestry Station as the John Michael Mathis Forestry Station to honor the late John Michael Mathis; creating s. 595.421, F.S.; establishing the Farmers Feeding Florida Program for specified purposes; requiring Feeding Florida to take certain actions to implement the program; prohibiting the foods purchased by Feeding Florida through such program from reentering the wholesale, retail, or secondary market; prohibiting Feeding Florida from allowing a candidate for elective office to host a food distribution event during a specified timeframe; providing applicability; amending s. 597.004, F.S.; making a technical change; prohibiting the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services from renewing a certificate of registration for a noncompliant facility unless certain documentation is provided with the renewal application; prohibiting entities whose certificate of registration has been revoked from reapplying for a specified period of time; amending s. 597.010, F.S.; authorizing, rather than requiring, the periodic adjustment of the annual rental fee charged for certain leases; amending s. 599.012, F.S.; making technical changes; amending s. 601.13, F.S.; renaming the Citrus Research and Development Foundation, Inc., as the Citrus Research and Field Trial Foundation, Inc.; providing for the merger and transfer of the Citrus Research and Development Foundation, Inc., to



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418 the Citrus Research and Field Trial Foundation, Inc.;
419 requiring the completion of the merger by a specified
420 date; providing that the merger is subject to
421 specified provisions; providing for the transfer of
422 funds; providing for the transfer of any program,
423 activity, duty, or function; establishing the Citrus
424 Research and Field Trial Foundation, Inc., as the
425 custodian of any property of the Citrus Research and
426 Development Foundation, Inc.; amending s. 616.001,
427 F.S.; revising