



Newsletter

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SENATE APPROVES ITS VERSION OF THE FARM BILL

Contribution by U.S. Apple Association
&
United Fresh

On December 14, 2007, the U.S. Senate approved its version of the U.S. Farm Bill. Although several amendments were offered on the floor to modify the bill, none of the amendments were specifically targeted at the specialty crop provisions. The five-year Senate Farm Bill includes over \$2.2 billion for specialty crop programs, including the Market Access Program, Specialty Crop Block Grants, Specialty Crop Research Initiative, the Fruit and Vegetable Snack Program, the Tree Assistance Program (TAP), and plant pest/disease protections. Specifically, the provisions of the Senate bill include:

- Expansion of the USDA Fruit & Vegetable Snack Program to more than 4.5 million schoolchildren across all 50 states. This program will be a cornerstone of public health efforts to help children develop a life-long healthier lifestyle through consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables.
- Expansion of *Specialty Crop Competitiveness* projects focused on regional and local priorities for specialty crop producers. These projects have been successful in improving food safety, investing in infrastructure, enhancing market opportunities and supporting research aimed at specific industry needs.
- Investment in prevention and mitigation protocols to combat invasive plant pests and diseases, which cost the economy millions of dollars per year and threaten the future of many fruit and vegetable commodities.
- Enhanced critical trade assistance and market promotion tools that will grow international markets for specialty crops.
- Significant new investment in research to improve the safety, quality, affordability and access to fresh fruits and vegetables.

The bill now heads to a House-Senate Conference Committee will be named and charged with working out the differences between the two bills. This will likely begin in early January and could last into February or March.

OMNI SUPREME SET TO EXPIRE

Beginning February 11, 2008, California kiwifruit industry will no longer be able to use Omni Supreme.

Originally, Omni Supreme was labeled under a Special Local Need (SLN) 24(c) registration, meaning that there were no other "alternative" products available for the kiwifruit industry. However, with the full label registration of PureSpray Green, the SLN for Omni Supreme expires. The Commission has contacted the registrant to see if a full label registration will be pursued for Omni Supreme so the industry may have additional products available. In the meantime, kiwifruit growers may use PureGreen.

NEW WIC RULES INCREASES FRUIT & VEGETABLE PURCHASES

On December 6, 2007, the U.S. Department of Agriculture proposed an interim rule that will assist in expanding the consumption of fruits and vegetables for participants in the Women, Infants and Children (WIC) program. According to the Produce Marketing Association, "the WIC percentage of the fruit/vegetable market will increase from 0 to 2.7 percent" due to the encouragement of those on the program to eat more fresh fruit and vegetables. The United Fresh Produce Association estimates that the change, which will provide \$8 to women and \$6 to children each month in new WIC fruit and vegetable vouchers, will result in "more than \$500 million in new purchasing power per year."

The new rule also eliminates juice for young infants, replaces juice with fruits and vegetables for older infants, and reduces the amount of juice for women and older children.

This interim rule represents the first comprehensive change to the WIC food packages since 1980, and aligns them with the Dietary Guidelines for Americans and current infant feeding recommendations of the American Academy of Pediatrics.

COMMISSION GETS STANDARDIZATION AND PRICING LAW

Beginning January 1, 2008, the California Kiwifruit Commission will have new language in its law that will allow the CKC to discuss standards and report pricing. Specifically, the law will allow:

- 1) The Commission may collect and disseminate to any and all interested persons, handler f.o.b., market price information based on sales that have occurred. Procedures for how the collection and dissemination of the information must be approved by the Commission and then submitted to the California Secretary of Agriculture for approval.

- 2) The Commission may recommend to the Secretary of Agriculture the adoption of kiwifruit quality standards or engage in any other activity authorized by the California Marketing Act of 1937. Any standards adopted will take effect beginning the next marketing season.

These two new pieces of Commission law give the industry additional tools to assist the California Kiwifruit industry. It is anticipated that the industry may begin discussing state standards during the next board meeting scheduled for the last part of January.

MEXICO BAKES CALIFORNIA KIWIFRUIT MUFFINS

On December 7, 2008, The California Centers for International Trade Development and the California Department of Food and Agriculture, in cooperation with the Western United States Agricultural Trade Association coordinated the participation of a Mexican Televised Cooking Show, which highlighted several California commodities. Those commodities that participated were able to highlight their commodity in a televised recipe with Chef Lu Lu. The cooking program, based in Monterey Mexico, provides consumers throughout the country a variety of recipes for the holiday season. For the California kiwifruit industry, kiwifruit muffins were the recipe of choice. Overall, this program provided an excellent outreach tool for Mexican consumers, while highlighting the nutritional benefits of the kiwifruit.

It should be noted that the \$2,250 program was made possible due to Market Access Program (MAP) dollars. The Commission is in the process of obtaining a copy of the show. Once received, the Commission will try and upload the program on its website.

NATIONAL KIWIFRUIT DAY

Don't forget that December 21, 2007 is National Kiwifruit Day. This is an opportunity to tell consumers about the nutritional value of kiwifruit as the first day of winter begins. Kiwifruit is a perfect holiday fruit both for color and for nutritional value. The Commission will be notifying its press contacts about the traditional kiwifruit day.

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RECIPE OF THE MONTH.....

KIWIFRUIT MUFFINS

¾ cups white flour	½ cup vegetable oil
½ cup whole wheat flour	2 eggs
½ cup cornmeal	½ cup milk
3 teaspoons baking powder	1 cup California kiwifruit, peeled and chopped
½ cup sugar	

Prepare oven to 400 F. Line muffin tins with paper liners or grease tins.

In a medium bowl, whisk together white flour, whole wheat flour, cornmeal, baking powder, and sugar until combined. Set aside.

In a large bowl, beat together oil, eggs, and milk. Stir in California kiwifruit by hand. Add dry ingredients to kiwifruit mixture, stirring by hand until just combined. Spoon into muffin tins, filling ¾ full. Bake 15 to 20 minutes until done.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- **CKC BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING**
Date: January 30, 2008
Location: TBA

For additional information please call (559) 226-4780

*The California Kiwifruit Commission Wishes
Everyone a Very Cheerful
Holiday Season and a Happy New Year!*



*Our office will be closed
December 24 & 25, 2007 and January 1, 2008
in observance of the Holidays.*