

SENATE STAFF ANALYSIS AND ECONOMIC IMPACT STATEMENT

(This document is based only on the provisions contained in the legislation as of the latest date listed below.)

BILL: CS/SB 1996

SPONSOR: Agriculture and Consumer Services Committee and Senator Cowin

SUBJECT: Agricultural Products

DATE: April 22, 1999 REVISED: _____

	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR	REFERENCE	ACTION
1.	<u>Henderson</u>	<u>Poole</u>	<u>AG</u>	<u>Favorable/CS</u>
2.	_____	_____	_____	_____
3.	_____	_____	_____	_____
4.	_____	_____	_____	_____
5.	_____	_____	_____	_____

I. Summary:

This bill creates the Saw Palmetto Berry Study Committee and provides for its membership and duties. It directs the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services to provide the committee with the necessary information, assistance and facilities so that the committee may carry out its duties.

This bill shall take effect upon becoming a law.

II. Present Situation:

A significant market has developed for saw palmetto berries. Chapter 97-220, L.O.F, passed the 1997 Legislature and became law. It included the fruit of the saw palmetto within the definition of agricultural products.

Section 604.15(3), F.S., defines "agricultural products" to include the natural products of the farm, nursery, grove, orchard, vineyard, garden and apiary; livestock; milk and milk products; poultry and poultry products; the fruit of the saw palmetto and limes, produced in the state, except tobacco, tropical foliage, sugarcane and citrus other than limes.

III. Effect of Proposed Changes:

Section 1. Creates the Saw Palmetto Berry Study Committee within the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (department) consisting of nine members that are to be appointed by the Commissioner of Agriculture. The nine member committee consist of: three landowners or individuals who represent landowners who have land where saw palmetto berry is harvested, three individuals or individuals who represent persons who actively engage in harvesting or transporting saw palmetto berry, and three processors or individuals who represent processors of saw palmetto berry for resale. Provides that the appointed committee members are

to serve until February 1, 2000. Authorizes committee members to be reimbursed for all necessary expenses incurred in performing their duties, including travel expenses according to s. 112.061, F.S. Requires the department to provide information, assistance and facilities necessary for the committee. Requires department staff to provide the necessary clerical and administrative functions for the committee. Requires the committee to analyze issues and potential solutions that involve the proper harvesting, transporting, processing and resale of saw palmetto berries. The issues include:

- Preventing the theft of saw palmetto berry from landowners through the enforcement of laws and documenting the origin of the harvested saw palmetto berry;
- Requiring the licensing of dealers of saw palmetto berry;
- Identifying the services needed by individuals who harvest the saw palmetto berry; and
- Marketing the saw palmetto berry as a naturally renewable agriculture product that is important to the economy of Florida.

Provides that the committee will be governed according to s. 570.0705, F.S. Requires the committee to prepare a report of its findings and conclusions by February 1, 2000. Requires the report to be submitted to the President of the Senate, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and the Commissioner of Agriculture. Requires the report to include recommended rules by the department and any necessary legislation to be considered during the 2000 Legislative Session. Provides this section to expire February 1, 2000.

Section 2. Provides that this bill will take effect upon becoming a law.

IV. Constitutional Issues:

A. Municipality/County Mandates Restrictions:

None.

B. Public Records/Open Meetings Issues:

None.

C. Trust Funds Restrictions:

None.

V. Economic Impact and Fiscal Note:

A. Tax/Fee Issues:

None.

B. Private Sector Impact:

None.

C. Government Sector Impact:

None.

VI. Technical Deficiencies:

None.

VII. Related Issues:

None.

VIII. Amendments:

None.

This Senate staff analysis does not reflect the intent or official position of the bill's sponsor or the Florida Senate.
