



January 6, 2012

Session Begins

The 2012 legislative session begins Tuesday, Jan. 10. Information about Florida Farm Bureau's objectives for the session is listed below. In cases where bills have been released, the numbers and sponsors are noted.

Legislative Issues

**State Preemption/Apiculture -
SB 1132 (Hays) & HB 1197 (Horner)**

This bill would give the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (DACS) exclusive authority to regulate beekeeping, apiaries and their locations.

**Sales Tax Exemption Expansion -
SB 592 (Siplin) & HB 821 (Albritton)**

These bills would expand the current sales tax exemption for electricity to include off-farm packinghouses.

**Limited Agricultural Associations -
SB 222 (Siplin) & HB 827 (Porter)**

These bills would give Limited Agricultural Associations (LAAs) the option to convert to Florida not-for-profit corporations. A hearing will be held by the Senate Commerce and Tourism Committee on Jan. 9.

Immigration -

Florida Farm Bureau opposes immigration legislation, ordinances or rules at the state or local level that would prevent the sustainability of Florida agriculture.

Farm Signs -

Legislation would exempt farm signs from any county or municipal code or fee.

Agritourism -

Legislation would define agritourism in Florida statutes. Agritourism should be used as a benefit to agriculture and an educational opportunity for the general public. Farmers and ranchers should not be liable for injury due to the inherent risks of an agritourism activity. Local governments should not regulate agritourism activities.

**Theft of Metals -
SB 540 (Smith) & HB 885 (Ford)**

This bill would create new offenses and increases penalties for metal theft. It would also impose stricter requirements for identification in the sale of scrap metal as well as more transparent record-keeping. A hearing will be held in the Senate Commerce and Tourism Committee on Jan. 9.

**Trespassing -
HB 77 (Davis) & SB 132 (Thrasher)**

These bills would authorize the use of purple paint marks to identify "no trespassing" area.

**Water Management Districts -
HB 157 (Porter and Pilon) & SB 560 (Dean)**

These bills would require water management districts to apply specified water reservations and minimum flows and levels in determining certain effects of proposed consumptive uses of water. A hearing is set for the Senate Government Oversight and Accountability Committee on Jan. 9.

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**Agriculture Industry Bill -
HB 1021 (Albritton) and SB 1184 (Norman)**

This legislation would:

- Prevent unauthorized people from taking photographs or making audio or video recordings on a farm;
- Amend the stormwater preemption in the Ag Lands Practices Act from “only counties” to “all local governments;”
- Allow citrus harvesters to use off-road diesel while traveling in-between groves and exempt them from having to purchase state issued tags; and
- Give DACS exclusive authority over the sale and use of commercial feed and feed stuffs.

**Energy -
SB 238 (Evers) & HB 4013 (Gaetz)**

These bills would repeal the requirement that all gasoline offered for sale in Florida must include a percentage of ethanol.

**Premises Liability -
HB 313 (Bembry) & SB 802 (Environmental Preservation)**

This legislation provides that an owner of an area who enters into written agreement with the state for a property to be used for outdoor recreational purposes is entitled to certain limitations on liability.

**Fertilizer -
HB 421 (Smith) & SB 604 (Dean)**

These bills provide that persons who have obtained the limited certification for an urban landscape commercial fertilizer application are required to follow best management practices, and that they are exempt from local government ordinances that address the fertilization of urban turfs, lawns and landscapes. The bill also requires DACS to provide to local and state governmental agencies information concerning the status of persons who have obtained certification.

**Land Application of Septage -
HB 115 (Drake) & SB 558 (Hays)**

These bills would terminate future prohibitions of land application of septage from onsite sewage treatment and disposal systems.

**Septic Tanks -
HB 79 (Coley and Drake), SB 114 (Evers),
SB 178 (Lynn), SB 558 (Hays), SB 820 (Dean)**

This legislation would repeal the 2010 mandate for periodic inspections of septic tanks.

Florida Farm Bureau will also oppose any legislation that:

- Reduces funding for the budgets of the University of Florida’s Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (IFAS) or DACS;
- Attacks private property rights; or
- Restores permitting or regulation requirements previously reduced.

Farm Bureau Day Activities

Please mark your calendars for Farm Bureau’s annual legislative days in Tallahassee. The briefing dinner will be held Monday, Jan. 30, at the Antique Car Museum (6800 Mahan Drive 32308) beginning at 6:30 p.m. **RSVPs are required.** Admission is \$15 and is payable at the door.

The legislative reception will be held Tuesday, Jan. 31, at the Tallahassee/Leon County Civic Center from 5:30 to 8:00 p.m. Admission is \$20. Attendees will receive a wristband when they pay at the door; wristbands must be worn throughout the event. No advance ticket sales will be available. RSVPs are not required for the reception.

4-H will hold their annual silent auction in conjunction with the reception. A live auction will begin at 7:30 p.m. as well.

Please call Christine Scovotto (850/222-2557) to RSVP or reserve exhibit space at the reception.

FFBF STATE LEGISLATIVE OFFICE

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