



Produce Marketing Association

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Produce Marketing Association Reaffirms Support of AgJOBS

NEWARK, DEL. – Produce Marketing Association (PMA) reaffirms its support of the Agriculture Job Opportunity, Benefits, and Security Act of 2007 that was introduced today. Known as AgJOBS, the reintroduction of this comprehensive immigration reform bill gives the fresh fruit and vegetable industry an opportunity to make its voice heard as the 110th Congress begins its work on this critical economic issue.

“AgJOBS is exactly what our industry needs to have the labor supply that is essential to have a consistent, full supply of fresh produce. We need everyone throughout the supply chain to contact their Congressional leaders to support this bill. This is especially important for PMA members outside traditional agricultural areas where we have support. Both the House and Senate need to hear from wholesalers, retailers, foodservice distributors, and operators,” said Kathy Means, PMA vice president of government relations.

Senators Dianne Feinstein (D-CA), Larry Craig (R-ID), Edward Kennedy (D-MA), and Barbara Boxer (D-CA), and Representatives Howard Berman (D-CA) and Chris Cannon (R-UT) introduced the bill. They were joined by producers who spoke about the economic losses they have sustained as a result of access to a reduced labor force.

The reintroduced legislation is equivalent to the agricultural provisions of S. 2611 that passed the U.S. Senate on May 25, 2006. AgJOBS restructures and reforms the current H-2A temporary agricultural worker program by:

- Substantially streamlining the program’s administrative procedures, including eliminating the labor certification process
- Reforming the requirements for H-2A employers, including an immediate reduction and gradual elimination of the Adverse Effect Wage Rate
- Streamlining the process for admission of H-2A aliens
- Allowing aliens not currently in the program to acquire H-2A status

AgJOBS also creates a means for aliens who have made a substantial commitment to agricultural work in the United States, but do not have valid documentation, to earn adjustment to legal status by meeting specific pre- and post-enactment agricultural work requirements. The

adjustment provision will provide an opportunity for agricultural employers to retain an experienced workforce while they anticipate and prepare for future participation in a reformed H-2A program.

PMA members who want to write their Congressional leaders are encouraged to use the PMA Advocacy Action Center at <http://capwiz.com/producemarketing/home/>.

For a summary of AgJOBS 2007, visit <http://new.pma.com/issues/AgJOBS2007.cfm>. For additional PMA resources on immigration reform, visit <http://new.pma.com/issues/immigration.cfm>.

Founded in 1949, the Produce Marketing Association is the leading trade association serving more than 2,100 companies representing all segments of the global produce and floral supply chains. Members rely on PMA year round for the business solutions they need to increase sales and consumption, build strong professional relationships, and expand their business opportunities.

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