

ANALYSIS OF HB 1564

***House Agriculture & Ecology Committee
11, 1999***

February

Authorizes the department of agriculture to enter into contracts for the purpose of promoting the export of Washington agricultural products.

BACKGROUND:

In 1991, the Legislature enacted legislation creating and committing to Washington's participation in the Pacific Northwest Economic Region (PNWER). The PNWER is comprised of Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Oregon, and Washington and the Canadian provinces of Alberta and British Columbia.

The PNWER was established to improve competitiveness and provide economic benefits to the participating states and provinces. Among other things, the PNWER agreement encourages collaboration and cooperative arrangements between the participating states and provinces in the area of trade, economic development, human resources, the environment and natural resources, energy, and education.

The Department of Agriculture is involved in international marketing with the Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development, and with the Fruit and Apple Commission.

SUMMARY:

The Department of agriculture is authorized to enter into contracts with members of the Pacific Northwest Economic Region in order to establish foreign trade offices to promote the export of Washington agriculture, or to contract with overseas contractors to promote the export of Washington agriculture.

Up to \$250,000 is appropriated for each of the fiscal years in the 1999-01 biennium to fund this effort. The funds are appropriated to the department of agriculture from the general fund and no funds may be used by the department for administrative purposes. The funds must be matched on a dollar-for-dollar basis with funds from other members of the Pacific Northwest economic region.

FISCAL NOTE: Available.

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