

AGRICULTURE

IOWA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

END OF SESSION, 2010

LOCAL FOODS STUDY

Requires the Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture to consult with Iowa State Extension and prepare a local food and farm plan containing policy and funding recommendations for supporting and expanding local food systems and for assessing and overcoming obstacles necessary to increase locally grown food production. The plan is to be submitted to the general assembly by January 10, 2011.

(HF 2525 Sent to Governor, effective upon signing)

WEIGHT AXLES FOR COMMERCIAL VEHICLES

Allows commercial motor vehicles, other than special trucks, on non-interstate highways, to haul up to 90,000 lbs. on six axles and 96,000 lbs. on seven axles. Currently, this is only allowed for livestock or construction vehicles. This allows farmers to haul heavier grain on trucks with more axles.

(HF 2512 Sent to Governor, effective 7/1/10)

DRAINAGE DISTRICTS

Increases the bid threshold for a drainage improvement from \$15,000 to \$20,000 to reflect the increased cost of doing business. Also, when a company bids a drainage project, it currently must post security of 10% of the amount of bid, not to exceed \$10,000. The bill removes the \$10,000 maximum and reduces the security cap from 10% to 5%, which is consistent with municipal law.

(HF 2273 Signed by Governor, effective 3/22/10)

NPDES PERMIT REQUIREMENTS

Addresses two issues that the U.S. EPA said needed to be changed to comply with federal National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) program authorization as part of the Clean Water Act. The bill addresses conflict of interest provisions within the Environmental Protection Commission for the approval of NPDES permits and certain NPDES permit requirements for confinement feeding operations.

(SF 2248 Signed by Governor, effective 7/1/10)

GRAIN DEALERS AND WAREHOUSE OPERATORS

Changes the way indemnity assessment fees, which are deposited into the grain indemnity fund, are charged to the grain industry (grain dealers and warehouse operators, not producers) when the fund is in an assessment mode. This is required if the fund goes below \$3 million and waived when the fund reaches \$8 million. The last time the fund was in assessment mode was 1988.

(SF 2299 Signed by Governor, effective 7/1/10)

FARM TENANCIES

A farm tenant may take any part of the aboveground part of a harvested crop (e.g., stover) until the farm tenancy terminates, unless the parties to the lease provide otherwise in writing.

(HF 2380 Signed by Governor, effective 7/1/10)