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## **Farm Bill Passage Draws Praise from Grower-Shipper Association**

Salinas, CA –Wednesday's passage of the Farm Bill Conference Report drew praise from leaders of the Grower-Shipper Association of Central California.

The Grower-Shipper Association of Central California, along with partners in the Specialty Crop Farm Alliance, has worked diligently over the past few years to develop a Farm Bill that addresses the needs and concerns of fruit and vegetable producers, which this bill accomplishes. "We are very pleased to see strong, bi-partisan support Congress has given to this Farm Bill," said Jim Bogart, President and General Counsel of the organization. "The passage of this legislation by overwhelming votes both houses is indicative of the across-the-nation support from agriculture this bill has received. We strongly encourage the President to sign it."

For the first time ever, the Farm Bill provides \$3 billion to support California specialty crop priorities including research, market access, trade assistance, pest and disease exclusion and prevention, nutrition policy, and conservation research, funding and incentives. "This bill is an excellent investment in agriculture in California, and particularly here on the Central Coast," said Kay Filice, Chairwoman of the Board. "As a mother and a farmer, I am particularly pleased about the funding of the nutrition programs. The Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Snack Program will now expand to all 50 states. This will definitely help develop life-long healthy eating habits for millions of children by providing fresh fruits and vegetables in our nation's schools."

The Grower-Shipper Association represents over 300 growers, shippers, packers, processors, and other businesses affiliated with or connected to the agriculture industry in Monterey, Santa Cruz, San Benito, and Santa Clara counties.

For more information, please contact Jim Bogart at the Association office at (831) 422-8844.

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