

Specialty Crops Reporting on Opportunities and Promotion Act (Specialty CROP Act)
Chairman Ron Wyden (D-OR) and Ranking Member Mike Crapo (R-ID)

Over 95 percent of the world's consumers are situated outside the United States. Strengthening and expanding foreign markets for U.S. exports is critical to the continued success of the U.S. specialty crop industry, as well as to the food security of consumers around the world.

For American growers of specialty crops – everything from potatoes to apples to tree nuts to wine – access to foreign markets plays a critical role in promoting exports, maintaining American competitiveness and supporting the livelihoods of Americans who work on farms and in downstream industries. American agricultural exports are also key to fighting global hunger, particularly amidst global crises and regional conflict.

Unfortunately, a range of trade barriers, including high tariffs, onerous labeling requirements, and unscientific regulations, continue to restrict access to foreign markets for U.S. growers. Particularly in the face of continued trade conflict with China and increased competitiveness of foreign producers, international markets are growing increasingly closed to U.S. food and agricultural exports. Additional efforts are needed to address new and longstanding trade barriers, diversify export markets outside of China and expand export opportunities for American specialty crop growers and processors.

U.S. law already requires the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) to provide an annual report to Congress describing market access barriers facing specialty crop exporters and the administration's efforts to resolve them. The bipartisan Specialty CROP Act would amend the existing report to make it more meaningful and actionable for policymakers, the U.S. specialty crop industry, and the American public.

What the Bill Does:

- Amends the annual “U.S. Specialty Crops Trade Issues Report” to –
 - Explicitly require participation and engagement from the Office of the United States Trade Representative (USTR);
 - Highlight specific trade barriers that limit the export competitiveness of specialty crops in specific markets, including tariff and non-tariff barriers;
 - Include an assessment of whether each trade barrier is subject to a U.S. FTA or international agreement;
 - Include specific information with respect to actions taken, or expected to be taken, by the U.S. government to address or resolve each trade barrier; and
 - Require a request for comment from both the public and the Agricultural Trade Advisory Committee (ATAC) for Trade in Fruits and Vegetables.
- Requires the report to be made public, while allowing for a classified annex in order to protect U.S. national security and economic strategy.
- Continues to define “specialty crop” as “fruits and vegetables, tree nuts, dried fruits, horticulture and nursery crops, including floriculture.”