

# The Juice

A Special Agriculture News Report From...

Congressman  
Adam H. Putnam

## Putnam Introduces Healthy America Act

Bill Expands Access to Nutritionally-Valuable Fruits and Vegetables to Needy and Children

Congressman Adam Putnam has introduced the *Healthy America Act* (H.R. 2592) aimed at promoting better health and the prevention of chronic diseases by expanding and enhancing policies that recognize and directly encourage the consumption of nutritionally-rich fruits, vegetables and juices.

The U.S. Surgeon General reports that fruit and vegetable consumption is a central part of a commitment toward better health and provides protective effects from most cancers, heart disease and obesity. Unfortunately, most children and adults do not meet the recommended guidelines of five servings a day of fruit and vegetables, with only 15% of elementary students and a quarter of adults consuming the recommended requirement. However, one of our major nutrition programs, the Women's, Infants and Children's (WIC) program, does not even allow participants access to fresh fruits and vegetables and must be changed.

The *Healthy America Act* would expand and enhance policies that recognize and directly encourage the consumption of fruits, vegetables and juices as critical to promoting health and preventing an array of chronic diseases. This legislation would elevate the federal government's investment in nutrition program priorities to better address the significant role that fruit and vegetables play in health promotion and disease prevention for the neediest Americans.

This legislation would provide students greater access to fruits, vegetables, and 100% juices in school feeding programs and expand the extremely successful Fruit and Vegetable Pilot Program nationwide. In addition, current federal nutrition guidelines are out of date and should be revised so that they are consistent with current dietary science. The WIC program for needy women and young children is nearly 30 years old and has changed little during that time. The *Healthy America Act* would require that dietary guidelines be revised regularly in keeping with modern dietary science and allow WIC participants access to fresh fruits and vegetables currently prohibited under the program.

The *Healthy America Act* has the support of the *American Association for Health Education*, the *Produce for Better Health Foundation*, the *American Institute for Cancer Research*, *Center for Science in the Public Interest*, *United Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Association*, the *Florida Fruit and Vegetable Association* and other nutrition, agricultural and school organizations.



Congressman Putnam held a press conference on June 24, 2003, introducing the *Healthy America Act*

## Summary of Provisions

**School Breakfast Program** - Increase the number and range of fresh fruits and 100% juices to students in the School Breakfast Program by requiring their availability and by establishing a commodity purchase program for school breakfast program.

**School Lunch Program** - Direct USDA to develop an incentive-based pilot project whereby school districts are rewarded when they offer more fruits and vegetables and juices.

**Expansion of the National School Fruit and Vegetable Pilot Program** - Authorize national expansion of the extremely successful Fruit and Vegetable School Snack Pilot Program as a permanent part of child nutrition programs.

**Summer School Feeding and After School Programs** - Direct USDA to facilitate the availability of fruits, vegetables and 100% juices in Summer School Feeding Programs and After School Programs.

### Women, Infants and Children (WIC):

- Require the WIC program to allow participants access to fresh fruit and fruits and vegetables, an important nutritional source for this needy population. (Current WIC program guidelines do not allow fresh fruits and vegetables.)

- Require USDA to update and improve the nutritional quality of the WIC food package.

- Revise the containers for WIC juices to reflect modern usage, including plastic and cardboard containers. Allow not-from-

concentrate juice in the WIC program. (Currently only concentrate is allowed.) Allow generic or store brands to be eligible under the WIC program for cost efficiencies.

- Provide a more targeted approach to WIC nutrition education efforts with a focus on fruit and vegetable intake.
- State/Local Partnerships - Establish partnerships with State Departments of Agriculture and other state and local non-profit organizations
- Department of Defense (DOD) Delivery Access - Expand the DOD fresh program, an efficient way schools can receive frequent small deliveries of fresh produce.
- USDA commodity purchases conformity to U.S. Dietary Guidelines for Americans
- Require USDA to write a report to Congress assessing current commodity purchasing practices and a develop plan of action to align purchases with dietary recommendations.
- USDA Role in National 5-A-Day Partnership - Improve the research and education agenda at USDA to reflect its new commitment to the National 5-A-Day Partnership.
- Fruit and Vegetable Research Agenda - Require USDA to develop a fruit and vegetable research agenda that coordinates research between the Economic Research Service, Food and Nutrition Service, Agricultural Research Service and other USDA agencies.

# Agriculture Appropriations Bill Clears House

## Measure Funds Key Florida Agriculture Programs for FY 2004

The Agriculture Appropriations Act for FY 2004, approved by the House of Representatives on July 14, 2003, provides funding for several Florida agricultural research initiatives. The measure also contains important provisions that will assist in the battle to combat invasive pests and diseases currently threatening agricultural production.



Rep. Putnam noted upon passage, "Agriculture feeds our nation, and is particularly important to Florida, which leads the nation in the production of citrus as well as many other goods. I am pleased that funding for Florida agricultural research programs was maintained under the bill, despite a 4.5% decrease in the overall agriculture appropriations package due to

extremely tight budget constraints."

The annual agricultural funding bill includes continued financial resources to combat Citrus Canker, Diaprepes, and Citrus Tristeza through the University of Florida, Lake Alfred Citrus Research and Education Center. The bill continues much-needed study on grapefruit drug interaction and allocates \$400,000 in new resources for the development of high-value alternative uses for citrus by-products at USDA's Winter Haven Agricultural Research Laboratory and the Florida Department of Citrus.

The spending bill also directs USDA to fund \$34 million for Citrus Canker eradication, and provides \$3.2 million for alternatives to Methyl Bromide, a significant crop protection tool to Florida agriculture. The Agriculture Appropriations bill now awaits action by the Senate.

## Country of Origin Regulations

The 2002 Farm Bill called for fresh fruits and vegetables, meat and seafood to be labeled at the retail level as to their Country of Origin. The House Committee on Agriculture, of which Congressman Putnam is a member, recently held a hearing to review the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) implementation of these provisions.

The hearing highlighted that while some industries, such as Florida's fruit and vegetable growers, are in strong support of the underlying statute, considerable concern exists with USDA's proposed implementation of the Country of Origin rules. The overarching recommendations from interested parties called for 1) common sense application of the law, 2) flexible compliance provisions which easily convey Country of Origin information to consumers, 3) greater working partnerships between industry and 4) regulatory officials, and cooperative efforts to draft workable regulations as critical compacts of a workable program.

Due to the considerable concern regarding USDA's implementation of the Country of Origin requirements for meat, the House of Representatives on July 14 voted to delay implementation of USDA's issuance of meat regulations for one year, pending review.

The State of Florida currently has a Country of Origin requirement for fresh produce that has been effect since 1979. Under Federal law, orange juice has been required to be labeled as to the Country of Origin of its contents since 1987.

## Important Upcoming Events

- Citrus Expo** - Aug 27-28, 2003
- WTO Trade Meeting:** Cancun Ministerial - Sept. 12-15, 2003
- IFAS Tailgator** - Sept 20, 2003
- Citrus Crop Forecast** - Oct. 10, 2003
- FTAA Trade Meeting:** Miami Ministerial - Nov 18-20, 2003



President Bush welcomed Brazilian President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva to the White House on June 20, 2003.

## FY2004 Agriculture Appropriations Act Florida Agricultural Research Projects of Interest University of Florida (UF) Institute for Food and Agricultural Sciences (IFAS)

T-STAR Invasive Pest (1/3 To UF)	\$10 million
Diaprepes/Root Weevil* (UF-Lake Alfred)	\$447,000
Citrus Tristeza* (UF-Lake Alfred)	\$750,000
Citrus Canker* (UF-Lake Alfred)	\$500,000
Grapefruit Juice Drug Interaction* (USDA ARS Lab-Winter Haven)	\$548,000
Citrus By-Product Waste Utilization (Winter Haven USDA Lab & FL DOC)	\$400,000
Ft. Pierce Agricultural Lab	\$500,000 (increase)
Tropical Aquaculture* (UF-Ruskin)	\$238,000
Citrus Canker Eradication (Directs USDA to fund \$9 million increase)	\$34 million
Feed Efficiency in Cattle*	\$248,000
Methyl Bromide Research (nationwide)	\$3.2 million

\* Level funding from FY 2003

## House Stalls USDA Proposal Requiring Greater Cost Share to Combat Invasive Pests and Disease

Congressman Putnam applauded an adopted amendment in the Agriculture Appropriations bill that would prohibit the implementation of a USDA proposed rule mandating that states and other cooperators, including affected industries, pay a greater share of the costs controlling agricultural pests and diseases. The House-passed amendment precludes issuance of the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) final Cost-Share rule that could have a dramatic effect on the efficacy of the Citrus Canker program.

The proposed APHIS regulations would require up to a 50 % cost share on behalf of states of the entire cost of combating animal and plant pests or diseases, including eradication, compensation, and all related detection and control efforts. In addition, affected industries would have to pay as much as 3 percent of overall program costs. The proposal indicates that in 2001, the federal cost share would have been reduced by \$19 million, a cost that would need to be taken up by the state and other cooperators.

Since 1999, the federal government has funded over \$1.2 billion to fight invasive pests and disease. The stated intent of the APHIS proposal is to facilitate long-term planning and funding and determine the appropriate allocation of responsibility in combating infestations among federal, state and local governments, industry and producers.

Federal statute has assigned responsibility to the federal government to "Prevent the introduction, spread, and establishment of plant pests, noxious weeds, and pests and disease of livestock in the United States." States already contribute a substantial part of pest and disease control efforts and the APHIS Cost-Share proposal is viewed as shifting an unfair burden of financial responsibility, which could ultimately place at risk the viability of these important programs. Additional action still must be taken by the Senate and signed into law by the President to preclude the APHIS Cost-Share measure from going into effect.



*District Office*  
650 East Davidson St.  
Bartow, FL 33830  
p. 863-534-3530  
f. 863-534-3559

*Washington Office*  
506 Cannon House Office Bldg.  
Washington, DC 20510  
p. 202-225-1252  
f. 202-226-0585

for more information, please visit:  
[www.adamputnam.house.gov](http://www.adamputnam.house.gov)