

March 19, 2025, Legislative Update

Office of the Director



Nevada
Department
of Agriculture

Budget Items

- Combining Budget Accounts 4552 and 4545
 - Currently, Budget Account 4545 houses personnel that facilitate and perform the operations of grant-funded programs, some of which are approved for reimbursement through Budget Account 4552.
 - Merging these accounts will result in more fiscal stability and will eliminate challenges that exist from drawing upon grants for reimbursement of personnel costs in Budget Account 4552 (since personnel are housed in Budget Account 4545).
- Aligning with the Governor’s objective to reorganize the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), the Nevada Department of Agriculture (NDA) anticipates the legislatively approved transfer of Budget Account 3194 from DHHS to NDA.
 - The transfer would include the addition of ten Environmental Health Inspectors to NDA staff.

Policy Bills

Assembly Bill 29—Revises provisions relating to motor vehicle fuel. (BDR 51-271)

Sponsored by the Committee on Natural Resources (on behalf of the NDA)

- Updates Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS) Chapter 590 to modernize and clarify fuel station signage/labeling requirements.

Assembly Bill 80—Establishes provisions relating to soil health. (BDR 49-387)

Sponsored by the Committee on Natural Resources

- Establishes the Soil Health Advisory Board within the State Department of Conservation and Natural Resources.
- Creates the Healthy Soils Initiative.
 - The NDA collaborated on an amendment to more precisely define the terms “producer” and “farm products.”

Assembly Bill 85—Authorizes the management of designated invertebrates. (BDR 45-229)

Sponsored by Assemblymember Watts

- Authorizes the management of designated invertebrates by the Board of Wildlife Commissioners and the Nevada Department of Wildlife.
 - The NDA contributed a conceptual amendment to ensure the Nevada Managed Pollinator Protection Plan continues to be a guiding force in the management of invertebrates.

Assembly Bill 171—Revises provisions relating to the State Quarantine Officer. (BDR 51-985)

Sponsored by Assemblymembers Yeager and Watts

- Authorizes the State Quarantine Officer to temporarily suspend the cage-free egg law.
- Passed both houses of the Legislature and signed into law by Governor Lombardo on February 13, 2025.
- Temporary order allowing for the sale of non-cage-free eggs issued by the State Quarantine Officer on February 18, 2025.

Assembly Bill 208—Restricts the use of certain products by governmental entities and government-funded entities. (BDR 19-737)

Sponsored by Assemblymember Yeager

- Prohibits a governmental entity from using certain products for reasons that differ from the patented use of those products.
 - The NDA contacted the bill sponsor to bring forth an amendment exempting governmental entities that rely on these products for veterinary uses.
 - Amendment presented to exclude certain agencies, including the NDA.

Assembly Bill 251—Revises provisions relating to the inspection of meat and poultry. (BDR 51-154)

Sponsored by Assemblymembers Koenig and Gurr

- Revises the definition of a “mobile processing unit” to reclassify such a unit as an official establishment.
 - The NDA is working through revising a fiscal note due to the need for inspectors to travel to remote areas to meet the requirements for labeled products.

Assembly Bill 268—Makes an appropriation to the State Department of Agriculture for universal free breakfast and lunch for Nevada pupils. (BDR S-340)

Sponsored by Assemblymembers Jauregui and Backus

- Appropriates \$43,000,000 for Fiscal Year 2025-2026 and \$43,000,000 for Fiscal Year 2026-2027 to the NDA to provide universal free breakfast and lunch to Nevada pupils.
- Heard in the Committee on Ways and Means on March 3, 2025.

Assembly Bill 333—Revises provisions relating to governmental administration. (BDR 49-833)

Sponsored by Assemblymembers Gray, Hansen, Roth, Anderson, DeLong, Goulding, and La Rue Hatch; and Senators Taylor, Daly, and Hansen

- Restores responsibility for the operation and maintenance of the Nevada State Fairgrounds to the NDA.
- Creates the Account for the Maintenance and Operation of the Nevada State Fairgrounds.
 - NDA helped produce an amendment clarifying that the primary use of the Fairgrounds will be to promote agriculture.

Assembly Bill 352—Revises provisions relating to businesses. (BDR 51-890)

Sponsored by Assemblymember Anderson

- Requires the NDA to license and inspect, as necessary, cottage cosmetic and cottage food operations.
 - If passed and approved, incoming staff from DHHS will be utilized to assist with carrying out the requirements of this bill.

Assembly Bill 405—Revises provisions relating to agriculture. (BDR 50-911)

Sponsored by Assemblymembers Flanagan, González, La Rue Hatch, Zermeño Moore; Considine, D’Silva, Jackson, Karris, and Orentlicher

- Requires the Director of the NDA to establish a program to assist in the development of community gardens and urban farms in food-insecure areas.

Senate Bill 31—Revises provisions relating to the adjudication of vested water rights. (BDR 48-260)

Sponsored by the Committee on Natural Resources

- Provides that a federal agency that is a claimant of a vested water right is not required to file proof of the claim on or before December 31, 2027.
- Revises the information that must be included in a notice of pending adjudication beginning on January 1, 2028, to also require any federal agency claiming a vested water right to make proof of such a claim.

Senate Bill 36—Establishes provisions relating to the conservation of groundwater. (BDR 48-384)

Sponsored by the Committee on Natural Resources

- Establishes the Nevada Water Buy-Back Initiative.
- Requires the Director of the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources to purchase certain water rights for the purpose of retiring the water rights.

Senate Bill 172—Prescribes certain rights for agricultural workers. (BDR 53-959)

Sponsored by Senator Flores

- Enacts the “Agricultural Workers’ Bill of Rights.”
- Revises provisions relating to wages and periods for rest and meals.
- Establishes rights of agricultural workers related to housing and access to certain service providers.
- Prohibits certain actions related to weeding and thinning.
- Authorizes collective bargaining for agricultural workers.
- Creates the Advisory Committee on Agricultural Work.

Senate Bill 204—Revises provisions relating to employment. (BDR 53-724)

Sponsored by Senator Ellison

- Authorizes certain temporary agricultural workers who hold H-2A visas to enter into a written agreement with their employers to exclude from their wages specified periods for meals, sleep and other free time.
- Exempting employers of such workers from the requirement to record the total number of hours employees work per day.

Senate Bill 233—Revises provisions relating to agriculture. (BDR 51-704)

Sponsored by Senators Doñate and Flores

- Requires the Director of the NDA to establish a program to certify certain food and farm products as grown or produced in Nevada.
- Requires the NDA to establish a Task Force on Farm Labor.
- Makes an appropriation of \$800,000 to carry out the Home Feeds Nevada Agriculture Food Purchase Program.

Senate Bill 274—Revises provisions governing state boards and commissions. (BDR 18-973)

Sponsored by the Committee on Government Affairs

- Implements a time frame for submitting a list of names to the Governor to fill a vacancy on Governor-appointed boards.
- Boards and commissions will have 60 days following a vacancy to submit a list of qualified candidates to the Governor.

Senate Bill 282—Revises provisions relating to food security. (BDR 18-75)

Sponsored by Senators Cannizzaro, Scheible, Pazina, Cruz-Crawford, Nguyen; Daly, Doñate, Dondero Loop, Flores, Ohrenschall and Taylor

- Requires the Department of Health and Human Services to establish a grant program to expand access to healthy foods in food deserts and areas at risk of becoming food deserts.
- Appropriates \$10,000,000 to the Department of Health and Human Services to fund the grant awards and provide technical assistance to the program.
- Revises the duties of the Council on Food Security.