

## Specialty Crops Should Not Play at Unnatural Disadvantage

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Mr. Speaker, the Specialty Crop Competitiveness Act is a step in the right direction in promoting profitable agri-business in the United States that incorporates responsible land use and levels the playing field for producers.

Specialty Crop production is big business in Oregon, accounting for \$905 million a year in revenue for the State of Oregon. There are over 30,000 producers of specialty crops in Oregon, dozens of processing/packing companies, and over 250 vineyards.

These specialty crops, which are not currently subsidized by the Federal Government, stand in stark contrast to sugar, cotton, and the other major crops that cost taxpayers billions of dollars each year and hamper the economies of developing nations.

Oregon has been a pioneer in maintaining an urban growth boundary that preserves valuable farmland that can be used to raise these niche climate crops that have a growing demand, both domestically and internationally. Not only does this benefit the Oregon economy, but our world famous pears, wines, berries, hazelnuts, and other specialty crops bring communities together in farmers market settings that benefit 64 communities in Oregon.

I urge my colleagues to usher in a new era of responsible crop production and vote for H.R. 3242.