

NORTH CAROLINA GENERAL ASSEMBLY
1975 SESSION

CHAPTER 928
HOUSE BILL 446

AN ACT TO APPROPRIATE SUPPLEMENTARY FUNDS TO THE NORTH CAROLINA AGRICULTURAL EXPERIMENT STATION FOR DEVELOPING TOMATO VARIETIES SUITABLE TO THE WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA AREA, AND OTHER RESEARCH STUDIES ON POSTHARVEST PHYSIOLOGY AND MARKETING TOMATOES.

Whereas, Western North Carolina has established itself as the leading area in tomato production and is recognized nationally for the quality tomatoes produced in this area; and

Whereas, the tomato industry has progressed from a noncommercial enterprise in 1958 to the present enterprise involving 1200 producers in the 18 western counties, bringing in an annual average income of over \$4,000,000 to the people of Western North Carolina; and

Whereas, the majority of these 1200 growers produce less than one acre of tomatoes, which is providing their main source of income; and

Whereas, the revenue received from tomato production in the State of North Carolina has generated income totaling around ten million dollars annually in Western North Carolina; and

Whereas, since the varieties presently being used in Western North Carolina are varieties that have been developed in the State of Florida and at present the breeding program there is no longer functioning, the tomato industry in Western North Carolina is in jeopardy because varieties are not available for maintaining the viability and continued success of the industry; and

Whereas, climatic conditions in Western North Carolina are unique, and tomato varieties have not been specifically developed for these conditions, variety development in the area is needed to assure the continued success of this industry; and

Whereas, plant diseases are a limiting factor in tomato production in Western North Carolina, and Verticillium wilt is becoming increasingly important on the limited suitable land available for tomato production, and broad spectrum disease resistant varieties are needed for the area; and

Whereas, without a breeding program the tomato industry in Western North Carolina was faltering in 1971, but the introduction of Florida's last variety has re-stimulated increased interest in 1974-75; however, the weakness of this variety is its lack of resistance to certain diseases, and thus its use is limited to a decreasing number of fields, the future of the tomato industry in Western North Carolina is solely dependent on the development of varieties for this area; and

Whereas, other limiting factors in maintaining a viable tomato industry in Western North Carolina are the need to continually up-date knowledge and develop new technology to maintain the competitiveness nationally in marketing and distribution of the tomato crop; and

Whereas, the tomato research resources needed to meet these industry demands extend far beyond those presently available in terms of manpower, technical assistance, equipment, and operating funds of the North Carolina Agricultural Experiment Station; Now, therefore,

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

Section 1. There is hereby appropriated from the General Fund of the State to the North Carolina Agricultural Experiment Station the sum of seventy-two thousand dollars (\$72,000) in each of the two fiscal years of the biennium beginning July 1, 1975, and ending June 30, 1977.

Sec. 2. This act shall become effective on July 1, 1975.

In the General Assembly read three times and ratified, this the 26th day of June, 1975.