



IDAHO

ONION GROWERS' ASSOCIATION

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TO: Members of the Senate Agricultural Affairs Committee

FR: Jarom Jemmett, President

H549

The Idaho Onion Growers' Association (IOGA) was formed in 1955 as a grower organization to represent onion producers in southwestern Idaho. Idaho ranks 5th in the nation for onion production and is famous for the Giant Spanish sweet onion crop. The volcanic soil, availability of water and seasonal temperatures make southwestern Idaho an ideal growing region. Idaho growers annually harvest an estimated 9,000 acres of onions. The IOGA stands in **SUPPORT** of H549.

The vast majority of onions grown in Idaho are irrigated through a method called drip irrigation. These irrigation systems allow producers to apply chemicals or fertilizer through the system. Currently, you must have a private applicator's license to chemigate or apply chemicals through irrigation systems. Not all producers have a private applicator's license. The standards to achieve a private applicator's license can be rigorous and time consuming and at times producers would rather hire a custom applicator to provide those applications. However, a producer may still want to utilize their irrigation system to chemigate.

H549 would assist in modernizing the requirements to attain a chemigators license. Idaho law currently mirrors federal regulations for all licensing types, even though the federal regulation does not mandate chemigation licensing. H549 would separate chemigation from the current licensing structure and allow Idaho to implement a state structure developed with input from industry. This would allow onion producers to still apply vital nutrients to their crops through chemigation without having to attain a private applicators license.

The Idaho Onion Growers' Association asks for your **SUPPORT** on H549.

Legislature/2024/H549_SenateAg