
Inventory of the Assembly Agriculture Committee Records

Collection number: See series description

California State Archives

Office of the Secretary of State

Sacramento, California

Processed by:

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Date Completed:

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Encoded by:

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Descriptive Summary

Title: Assembly Agriculture Committee records

Dates: 1972-2003

Collection number: See series description

Creator: Assembly Agriculture Committee

Collection Size: 13 cubic feet

Repository: California State Archives

Sacramento, California

Abstract: The Assembly Agriculture Committee Records consist of 13 cubic feet of records reflecting the committee's activity in investigating and introducing legislation of concern to California's large agricultural community and the subsidiary industries that support it.

Physical location: California State Archives

Languages: Languages represented in the collection: English

Access

Collection is open for research.

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Preferred Citation

[Identification of item], Assembly Agriculture Committee Records, LP[number]:[folder number], California State Archives, Office of the Secretary of State, Sacramento, California.

Acquisition Information

The California State Archives acquired the Assembly Agriculture Committee records as required by state law.

Committee History

"The Constitution makes it the duty of the Legislature to encourage agriculture, that first and noblest of all industrial pursuits," declared Governor Peter H. Burnett to the first session of California's Legislature (Senate Journal, December 21, 1849). Not surprisingly then, Agriculture was one of the Assembly's original ten standing committees. Over the last century and a half, the committee's interests have

gone from establishing favorable conditions for the development of agriculture to protecting what has become a multi-billion dollar agribusiness industry.

Just four weeks after its first meeting in 1850, the committee expressed deep concern that American farmers would not be attracted to California. Members feared that the state's destitute appearance "leads to doubt of the adaptation of the soil and climate to a successful experiment in that business, and is deterring many from engaging in it" (Senate Journal, January 14, 1850). As well, many farmers had not yet returned to the plough after heeding the call of gold. Finally, numerous conditions existed which discouraged engagement in farming, including horse stealing, the intentional setting of prairie fires, and the ever present destruction caused by wild animals. The committee devoted their attention over the next few years, and in some cases decades, to promoting legislation that would alleviate these problems. Thanks to subsidized irrigation, agriculture in California has become a multi-billion dollar industry. The committee has grown from its original five members to as many as seventeen in recent years. Members are usually from agricultural districts. Most issues reviewed by the committee pertain to the Department of Food and Agriculture and the Food and Agricultural Code. Each year the committee addresses critical issues related to commodities, industry-related commissions, agricultural land use and preservation, fairs and expositions, marketing law, pest management, pesticides, veterinary medicine, plant and animal health, and food labeling. They address state budget impacts to agriculture as well. The Agriculture Committee's 1997-1998 Legislative Summary from the committee chairperson states, "The Chair is committed to ensuring the continued viability for the agricultural industry, related industries, and the communities that rely on those industries, as well as making sure that there is full conformity to the laws of the state."

- Briggs, John V. (Rep.), 1971-1974
- Thurman, John (Dem.), 1975-1982
- Waters, Norman (Dem.), 1983-1990
- Areias, Rusty (Dem.), 1991-1994
- Harvey, Trice (Rep.), 1995-1996
- Cardoza, Dennis (Dem.), 1997-2000
- Matthews, Barbara (Dem.), 2001-

Scope and Content

The Assembly Agriculture Committee Records consist of 13 cubic feet of records reflecting the committee's activity in investigating and introducing legislation of concern to California's large agricultural community and the subsidiary industries that support it. Much of this legislation either added to or amended the California Food and Agricultural Code. Materials include bill files, member resolutions, hearing files, select committee hearing files, and subject files. The bulk of the collection consists of bill files from 1972-1986 and again from 1993-2000. Bill files for the years 1987-1992 were not sent to the State Archives. A random assortment of committee working papers (1949-1979) exists which are not included in this finding aid. As well, there are a few documents from 1853, 1855, and 1883. Please see card catalog for information on the exact content of these files. Researchers should also check for recently received, unprocessed records of this committee.

Because of the size and complexity of California's agricultural industry, the subjects covered in this collection are widely varying. The committee's files document the legislature's continuing efforts to combat exotic pest threats to the state's agricultural industry, in particular the Mediterranean Fruit Fly and the Glassy-winged Sharpshooter. Another major area of legislative activity involves amendments to the California Land Conservation Act, commonly known as the Williamson Act. This legislation has acted as the state's agricultural land protection program since it was enacted in 1965. Researchers may also be interested in the many bills reviewed by the committee concerning the humane treatment of animals. As the files document, this area of legislation continues to capture the attention of large numbers of constituents, including private citizens and animal rights interest groups.

Arrangement

This record group is arranged into five series: Bill Files (1972-1986, 1993-2003), Member Resolution Files (2000-2003), Hearing Files (1997-2001), Select Committee Hearing Files (2001), Subject Files (1981-2003).

Indexing Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the library's online public access catalog.

California -- Legislature -- Assembly -- Agriculture Committee

California. Dept. of Food and Agriculture

Agriculture and state

Related Material

John V. Briggs Papers

John Thurman Papers

Norman Waters Papers

Rusty Areias Papers

Trice Harvey Papers

Dennis Cardoza Papers

Senate Agriculture and Water Resources Committee Papers

Joint Interim Committee on Agriculture and Livestock Problems/Senate Fact-Finding Committee on Agriculture Papers

File folders: See Series 1 **Bill Files 1972-1986 and 1993-2003**
below for LP
numbers

Physical Description: 214 file folders

Arrangement

Bill files are arranged chronologically by legislative session then numerically and alphabetically by bill number.

Scope and Content Note

Most bill files include all or some of the following items: bill analyses, amendments and resolutions, author's statements, testimony, press releases, newspaper clippings, correspondence, roll calls, records of votes, committee statements, and committee rules. Bill files for the years 1987-1992 were not sent to the State Archives.

1972: AB112-AB2368; ACR38; HR67; SB234-SB1428; SJR1 (4ff) LP166:156-159

1973-1974: AB77-AB4442; ACR134-ACR195; AJR70-AJR94; HR14-HR142; SB77-SB2111 (8ff) LP166:162-169

1975-1976: AB254-AB4480; ACR120-ACR143; AJR11-AJR51; SB38-SB2167; SCR88 (6ff) LP242:171-176

1977-1978: AB68-AB4214; ACR77-ACR164; AJR3-AJR92; SB199-SB2214; SCR80; SJR30-SJR36 (14ff)

LP209:53-66

1979-1980: AB64-AB3464; ACR28; AJR79; SB330-SB1715 (9ff) LP216:43-51

1981-1982: AB309-AB3743; ACR15-ACR103; AJR106-AJR128; SB70-SB1917; SCR61; SJR17-SJR68 (2ff)

LP242:179-180

1983-1984: AB122-AB4044; ACR31-ACR136; AJR23-AJR148; SB275-SB2076 (14ff) LP226:187-200

1985-1986: AB185-AB4414; ACR10; AJR6-AJR90; SB55-SB2526 (26ff) LP254:199-224

1993-1994: AB207-AB3837; AB4X; AJR36; SB72-SB1821; SJR20 (24ff) LP353:1-24

1995-1996: AB124-AB3220; HR12; SB42-SB2102; SCR50; SJR36; SB1XXX (17ff) LP353:25-41

1997-1998: Committee Rules; AB111-AB2769; ACR32; ACR168; AJR54; HR55-HR56; SB80-SB2227 (30ff)

LP353:42-71

1999-2000: AB47-AB2861; HR12-HR58; SB95-SB2204; SJR38 (60ff) LP353:72-131

LP353:132-135 Series 2 **Member Resolution Files 2000-2003**

Physical Description: 4 file folders

Arrangement

Member resolution files are arranged chronologically by year.

Scope and Content Note

This series consists of material related to various Member Resolutions made by the Assembly on behalf of the Chairperson of the Assembly Agriculture Committee. These resolutions publicly recognize individuals or groups for noteworthy events such as retirements, anniversaries, and awards of merit. The majority of member resolutions in the series recognize individuals retiring from the California Department of Food and Agriculture after a lengthy career with the agency.

LP353:136-149 Series 3 **Hearing Files 1997-2001**

Physical Description: 14 file folders and 2 audiocassette tapes

Arrangement

Hearing files are arranged chronologically by date of hearing.

Scope and Content Note

Hearing types include informational hearings, joint informational hearings, and round tables. Files may contain agendas, testimony, transcripts, reports, and background material. The two audiocassette tapes-recorded at the same hearing-have been separated from the file and are stored in a climate-controlled vault for preservation purposes. For a list of hearing dates and topics see master finding aid at the California State Archives.

LP353:150-151 Series 4 **Assembly Select Committee on Future of Farming in California Hearing Files 2001**

Physical Description: 2 file folders

Arrangement

Select committee hearing files are arranged chronologically by hearing date.

Scope and Content Note

This series consists of two hearing files created by the Assembly Select Committee on Future of Farming in California.

LP353:152-183 Series 5 **Subject Files 1981-2003**

Physical Description: 32 file folders

Arrangement

Subject files are arranged alphabetically by subject title.

Scope and Content Note

Most of these subject files were created during the 1981-1982 legislative session, and include topics such as boysenberries, the Food Quality Protection Act, mosquito abatement, and veterinary labs. For a list of subject files see master finding aid at the California State Archives.