

ROBERTS-STABENOW
UNITED STATES GRAIN STANDARDS REAUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2020
SUMMARY DESCRIPTION

Background

The United States Grain Standards Act (USGSA) of 1916 (P.L. 64-190), as amended (7 U.S.C. 71 et seq.), authorizes the Federal Grain Inspection Service (FGIS) of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to establish official marketing standards for certain grains and oilseeds. The covered crops are barley, canola, corn, flaxseed, oats, rye, sorghum, soybeans, sunflower seed, triticale, wheat, and mixed grain. As issued and modified in regulations, official grain standards define each grain, classes of the grain, and numerical grades. The standards facilitate the marketing of grain by serving in contract language, enabling buyers and sellers to more easily determine quality, and therefore value, of these commodities. The USGSA also prohibits deceptive practices with respect to the inspection and weighing of grain (such as altering official certificates or adding foreign material to any grain) and provides penalties for violations of the Act.

All official inspections are financed by user fees authorized by the USGSA only through the statutorily set time period, with the federal portion of fee revenue maintained in a trust fund. FGIS activities such as developing grain standards and improving techniques for measuring grain quality are financed with congressionally appropriated funds. In fiscal year 2019, user fee revenue under USGSA was approximately \$32 million, and the FGIS appropriation was \$20 million.

Description of the Roberts-Stabenow Reauthorization of U.S. Grain Standards Act

The Roberts-Stabenow bill reauthorizes the U.S. Grain Standards Act until September 30, 2025. The bill:

- Includes customers or applicants for inspection or weighing services among the parties that must be notified in writing at least 72 hours in advance if a delegated State agency intends to temporarily discontinue official inspection or weighing services.
- Extends the authority to collect fees to fund official inspections to September 30, 2025.
- Extends the authority to collect fees to provide official weighing services to September 30, 2025.
- Requires the Secretary to report and publish quarterly the number of waivers for official inspections requested or granted; the number of exceptions for inspections across geographic boundaries requested or granted; and certain inspection program data for intrinsic quality factors and food safety factors that have been included in the FGIS annual report for the most recent five years.
- Extends the administrative and supervisory cost cap to September 30, 2025.

- Prohibits user fees collected by FGIS for official grain inspection and weighing services from being used for activities related to the development or maintenance of grain standards, or for any other activity that is not directly related to the performance of an official inspection or weighing service.
- Maintains the length of the terms of service of the advisory committee, authorizes members to serve up to two consecutive terms, and reauthorizes the advisory committee through September 30, 2025.
- Requires USDA to conduct a comprehensive nationwide review of the official agency geographic areas and to report its findings and recommendations to Congress within 18 months of enactment.