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## **Wisconsin Cranberry Industry Applauds Lawmakers Efforts on Wetland Regulations**

**WISCONSIN RAPIDS, Wis.** – The [Wisconsin State Cranberry Growers Association](#) (WSCGA) today praised Sen. Kedzie, Rep. Mursau and the State Legislature for its leadership and quick action to change wetland regulations to assist with development in the state, including cranberry marsh expansions and renovations. Both houses have approved Senate Bill 368 and Governor Walker is expected to sign the bill.

“We are very appreciative of the state’s leadership role and the attention given to helping reform wetland regulations that will benefit many agricultural industries in Wisconsin,” said Tom Lochner, executive director of WSCGA. “The current permitting process far too often functions as a simple veto of a project that otherwise complies with the federal permitting procedure.”

According to Lochner, new regulations under SB 368 will allow the cranberry industry to continue to grow the state’s economy by making it less challenging for growers to expand and renovate their marshes. He added that Wisconsin’s cranberry growers are great stewards of the land and will continue their commitment to the environment under the new regulations.

Under SB 368, new regulations will weigh environmental effects and economic benefits of a project and the will impose a timeline for the DNR’s approval process for each permit. The bill also revises the mitigation program by giving landowners the option to create wetlands in a new area if a project has no other place for such mitigation. More information on the bill can be found at [www.wisconsin.gov](http://www.wisconsin.gov).

Wisconsin’s cranberry industry has an annual economic impact of \$300 million and supports 3,400 local jobs, according to a University of Wisconsin report. Cranberries – Wisconsin’s official state fruit – are grown on approximately 21,000 acres in central and northern Wisconsin, making the berry the state’s largest fruit crop. In 2011, Wisconsin growers harvested approximately 4.3 million barrels of cranberries – more than half of the entire world’s supply of cranberries.

WSCGA, which is celebrating its 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year, is committed to developing and implementing programs that will assist growers in doing a better job of growing cranberries and strengthen the public support for the industry in Wisconsin. For more information, visit [www.wiscran.org](http://www.wiscran.org). WSCGA is also on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

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