16104295D

HOUSE BILL NO. 1314

Offered January 21, 2016

A BILL to amend the Code of Virginia by adding in Title 3.2 a chapter numbered 46.1, consisting of sections numbered 3.2-4614 and 3.2-4615, relating to vineyards; Grapevine Grant Program and Fund.

Patron—Hugo

Referred to Committee on Agriculture, Chesapeake and Natural Resources

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That the Code of Virginia is amended by adding in Title 3.2 a chapter numbered 46.1, consisting of sections numbered 3.2-4614 and 3.2-4615, as follows:

CHAPTER 46.1.

VINEYARDS AND ORCHARDS.

§ 3.2-4614. Grapevine Grant Fund.

A. There is hereby created in the state treasury a special nonreverting fund to be known as the Grapevine Grant Fund. The Fund shall be established on the books of the Comptroller.

B. All funds appropriated for such purpose and any gifts, donations, grants, bequests, and other funds received on its behalf shall be paid into the state treasury and credited to the Fund. Interest earned on moneys in the Fund shall remain in the Fund and be credited to it. Any moneys remaining in the Fund, including interest thereon, at the end of each fiscal year shall not revert to the general fund but shall remain in the Fund.

C. Moneys in the Fund shall be used solely for the purpose of funding the Grapevine Grant Program pursuant to § 3.2-4615. Expenditures and disbursements from the Fund, which shall be in the form of grants, shall be made by the State Treasurer on warrants issued by the Comptroller upon written request signed by the Commissioner. Grants from the Fund shall only be made to applications to the Grapevine Grant Program pursuant to § 3.2-4615.

§ 3.2-4615. Grapevine Grant Program.

A. As used in this chapter, unless the context requires a different meaning:

"Fund" means the Grapevine Grant Fund established pursuant to § 3.2-4614.

"Grant" means a grant issued pursuant to the Grapevine Grant Program.

"Individual" means an independent cidery, Virginia farm winery, orchard, or vineyard dedicated to the growing of grapes or planting of fruit trees that are used or intended to be used in the production of wine or cider by a Virginia farm winery.

"Orchard" means agricultural lands located in the Commonwealth consisting of at least one contiguous acre dedicated to the planting of fruit trees that are used or intended to be used in the production of wine or cider by a Virginia farm winery.

"Virginia farm winery" means an establishment located in the Commonwealth that is licensed as a Virginia farm winery pursuant to Chapter 2 (§ 4.1-200 et seq.) of Title 4.1.

"Vineyard" means agricultural lands located in the Commonwealth consisting of at least one contiguous acre dedicated to the growing of grapes that are used in or intended to be used in the production of wine by a Virginia farm winery as well as any plants or other improvements thereon.

B. Beginning January 1, 2017, any individual who purchases materials or supplies for vines or fruit trees for use in establishing a new vineyard or orchard or expanding an existing vineyard or orchard may apply for a grant from the Fund.

C. An individual shall apply to the Department for a grant for purchased materials or supplies for vines or fruit trees for use in establishing or expanding a vineyard or orchard. Grants shall be issued in the order in which the completed eligible applications are received. In the event that the funds requested by eligible grants in a fiscal year exceed the funds available in the Fund, such grants shall be paid in the next fiscal year in which funds are available.

D. The Department shall develop guidelines setting forth the general requirements of qualifying for a grant and for the administration of grants.

E. The Department shall compile, maintain, and distribute electronically information on the grant program and on vineyard and orchard management.