

Date of Hearing: March 25, 2026

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE
Esmeralda Soria, Chair
AB 1594 (Harabedian) – As Amended March 4, 2026

SUBJECT: Fairs: Fairs Allocation and Classification Committee: duties

SUMMARY: This bill replaces the phrase “local fair” with “state-designated fairs” in relation to the duties of the Fairs and Allocation and Classification Committee (FACC).

EXISTING LAW:

- 1) Establishes the FACC, which consists of 14 members of the Legislature. (Food and Agriculture Code (FAC) 4531)
- 2) Requires the FACC to, among other things, seek methods whereby private financing can be secured for support of all local fairs, regularly review the capability of the Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) to administer and supervise the allocation of moneys from the Fair and Exposition Fund to all local fairs, and make recommendations to the Legislature regarding the establishment of new district agricultural associations or local fairs. (FAC 4533)

FISCAL EFFECT: Unknown

COMMENTS: There are 54 statutory District Agriculture Associations (DAA)s, of which 52 are active, and 41 operate on state owned lands. They hold various activities on their sites, such as fairs, day care operations, fund raising and commercial events. DAAs in some areas provide the only event space for the local community. DAA budgets run from several hundred thousand dollars to over ten million dollars. Only a few DAAs are self-sustaining, most are not.

California’s fairs operate under the guidelines of CDFA’s Division of Fairs and Expositions. Collectively they host events that are attended by nearly ten million Californians and tourists annually. In addition to hosting enriching events, fairgrounds play a critical role during emergencies by serving as evacuation centers and providing housing after natural disasters.

According to the author, this bill modernizes references in FAC to reflect the current terminology used to describe fairs that are officially recognized in state law as part of the network of California fairs, specifically district agricultural association fairs, county fairs, and citrus fruit fairs that are eligible for state funding and oversight. This update ensures clarity and consistency in statute, reduces confusion in administration and funding, and aligns the law with how California’s fair network currently operates in practice.

RELEVANT LEGISLATION

AB 1711 (Connoly) of 2026: Expands and clarifies how money in the Fair and Exposition Fund can be used by allowing broader spending on safety, compliance, maintenance, property improvements, and fair operations, while capping administrative costs and requiring that all available funds be allocated each year by December 31.

SB 493 (Becker) of 2025: This bill renames fair managers as secretary-managers of district agricultural associations and transfers pay-setting authority to the Secretary of the CDFA. It requires the Secretary to establish a single salary range, conduct a salary survey every three years, and ensure pay stays within existing limits until the first survey. Currently held at the Assembly Desk.

AB 2143 (Connolly), Statutes of 2024, Chapter 599: This bill repealed section of the Business and Professions Code (BPC) related to fairs within California, revised, and recast the deleted BPC into FAC, as specified.

REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:

Support

None on file

Opposition

None on file

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