

**Chair:**

House Finance  
Subcommittees for:  
Dept. of Law  
Dept. of Public Safety

**Member:**

House Finance Committee  
Legislative Council

# Alaska State Legislature



## Representative Bill Stoltze

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## **House Approves Definitions of Organic Produce**

### **Aligns with Federal Requirements, Saves Farmers Money**

(JUNEAU)—The Alaska House of Representatives unanimously approved House Bill 226 by a vote of 36 to zero on Thursday. Sponsored by Rep. Bill Stoltze (R-Chugiak/Mat-Su), HB 226 brings the state of Alaska's definition of organic agricultural products in line with the federal definition.

“The federal government adopted these guidelines in 2001,” Stoltze said. “It’s time we do the same to help Alaska’s organic producers.”

HB 226 also creates an Alaska organic certification program that provides in-state certification for organic agricultural producers, processors, and handlers. Currently, organic operators pay outside certification specialists from \$1,500 to \$3,000 to fly to Alaska and verify that Alaskan operations comply with the federal organic standards. New state guidelines in HB 226 will allow qualified state inspectors to complete the organic inspection process and receive final certification from a designated state official.

“The legislature needs to alleviate the unnecessary burden on organic agricultural operators for the expense and timing issues created by the lack of an Alaskan organic certification program,” Stoltze said. “Organic farming is an important part of agriculture in Alaska that provides employment for Alaskans and economic support for their communities.”

[HB 226](#) moves to the Senate.

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