

Farm Bill Expands Biosolids Regulation, Limits Local Equipment Bans, and Revises State Land Sales for Agriculture

SB 290 – Sen. Keith Truenow (HB 433 – Rep. Danny Alvarez)

General Bill Summary

CS/CS/CS/SB 290, commonly referred to as the 2026 Florida Farm Bill, makes numerous statutory revisions affecting agricultural regulation, state land management, and environmental oversight by the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS).

The bill preempts local governments from regulating or prohibiting gasoline-powered farm equipment and landscape maintenance equipment, preventing counties and municipalities from adopting ordinances that restrict such equipment or treat it differently from other similar equipment.

The legislation also expands state oversight and policy direction related to biosolids management, directing state agencies to evaluate and strengthen regulatory frameworks governing the land application, processing, and potential commercialization of biosolids and biosolids-derived products. These provisions are intended to encourage development of technologies that convert biosolids into usable agricultural products while addressing environmental concerns related to nutrient loading and contamination.

The legislation also revises biosolids management by requiring certain biosolids land application sites permitted after July 1, 2020, to apply only Class AA biosolids beginning July 1, 2028. Local governments that do not transport biosolids for land application outside their county boundaries have until July 1, 2031, to comply. The bill also removes the requirement that DEP biosolids rules be ratified by the Legislature.

In addition, the bill modifies provisions governing the identification and disposition of surplus lands by requiring review of whether certain surplus state-owned and local government lands are suitable for bona fide agricultural purposes before disposition. The bill also creates the Food Animal and Equine Veterinary Medicine Loan Repayment Program, establishes the Florida Native Seed Research and Marketing Program, and makes permanent the Farmers Feeding Florida Program.

Potential County Impact

SB 290 contains several provisions that may affect county governments through state preemption, environmental management responsibilities, and land use implications.

The bill's preemption of local regulation of gasoline-powered farm and landscape equipment restricts county authority to adopt environmental or noise ordinances targeting these engines. Counties considering electrification policies or emissions-related restrictions for landscaping equipment would be prevented from implementing such regulations.

The biosolids provisions may have significant operational and fiscal implications for counties that own or operate wastewater treatment facilities. Beginning July 1, 2028, certain land application sites may apply only Class AA biosolids, and local governments that do not transport biosolids outside their county boundaries have until July 1, 2031, to comply.

Changes related to surplus state land evaluation for agricultural use may affect county land use planning and rural economic development strategies. If state lands are declared surplus and made available for agricultural purposes, counties may experience increased agricultural activity or development pressure in rural areas. These changes could also influence local infrastructure planning, agricultural preservation policies, and coordination with state agencies on land management decisions.

Fiscal impacts to counties are uncertain but may arise through changes to biosolids management practices, coordination with state agricultural programs, and potential shifts in land use patterns tied to state land disposition decisions.

Effective Date

The bill takes effect July 1, 2026, except where otherwise specified in the legislation.

Primary Statutory References

- s. 125.489, F.S.
- s. 166.063, F.S.
- s. 253.0341, F.S.
- s. 403.067, F.S.
- s. 570.846, F.S.
- s. 570.832, F.S.
- s. 590.02, F.S.
- s. 500.04, F.S.