

**CHAPTER 56—UNFAIR TRADE PRACTICES  
AFFECTING PRODUCERS OF AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS**

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**§ 2301. Congressional findings and declaration of policy**

Agricultural products are produced in the United States by many individual farmers and ranchers scattered throughout the various States of the Nation. Such products in fresh or processed form move in large part in the channels of interstate and foreign commerce, and such products which do not move in these channels directly burden or affect interstate commerce. The efficient production and marketing of agricultural products by farmers and ranchers is of vital concern to their welfare and to the general economy of the Nation. Because agricultural products are produced by numerous individual farmers, the marketing and bargaining position of individual farmers will be adversely affected unless they are free to join together voluntarily in cooperative organizations as authorized by law. Interference with this right is contrary to the public interest and adversely affects the free and orderly flow of goods in interstate and foreign commerce.

It is, therefore, declared to be the policy of Congress and the purpose of this chapter to establish standards of fair practices required of handlers in their dealings in agricultural products.

(Pub. L. 90-288, § 2, Apr. 16, 1968, 82 Stat. 93.)

**SHORT TITLE**

Pub. L. 90-288, § 1, Apr. 16, 1968, 82 Stat. 93, provided: "That this Act [enacting this chapter] shall be known as the Agricultural Fair Practices Act of 1967."

**§ 2302. Definitions**

In this chapter:

**(1) Agricultural products**

The term "agricultural products" shall not include cotton or tobacco or their products.

**(2)(2)<sup>1</sup> Association of producers**

**(A) In general**

The term "association of producers" means any association of producers of agricultural products engaged in marketing, bargaining, shipping, or processing as defined in section 1141j(a) of title 12, or in section 291 of this title.

**(B) Inclusion**

The term "association of producers" includes an organization whose membership is exclusively limited to agricultural producers and dedicated to promoting the common in-

terest and general welfare of producers of agricultural products.

**(3)(3)<sup>1</sup> Handler**

**(A) In general**

The term "handler" means any person engaged in the business or practice of (i) acquiring agricultural products from producers or associations of producers for processing or sale; or (ii) grading, packaging, handling, storing, or processing agricultural products received from producers or associations of producers; or (iii) contracting or negotiating contracts or other arrangements, written or oral, with or on behalf of producers or associations of producers with respect to the production or marketing of any agricultural product; or (iv) acting as an agent or broker for a handler in the performance of any function or act specified in clause (i), (ii), or (iii).

**(B) Exclusion**

The term "handler" does not include a person, other than a packer (as defined in section 191 of this title), that provides custom feeding services for a producer.

**(4) Producer**

The term "producer" means a person engaged in the production of agricultural products as a farmer, planter, rancher, dairyman, fruit, vegetable, or nut grower.

(Pub. L. 90-288, § 3, Apr. 16, 1968, 82 Stat. 94; Pub. L. 110-234, title XI, § 11003, May 22, 2008, 122 Stat. 1354; Pub. L. 110-246, § 4(a), title XI, § 11003, June 18, 2008, 122 Stat. 1664, 2116.)

**CODIFICATION**

Pub. L. 110-234 and Pub. L. 110-246 made identical amendments to this section. The amendments by Pub. L. 110-234 were repealed by section 4(a) of Pub. L. 110-246.

**AMENDMENTS**

2008—Pub. L. 110-246, § 11003, in introductory provisions, substituted "In this chapter:" for "When used in this chapter—", redesignated subsecs. (e), (c), (a), and (b) as pars. (1) to (4), respectively, inserted par. headings, in pars. (2) and (3), inserted duplicate par. designations, designated existing provisions as subpar. (A), and added subpar. (B), in par. (3), redesignated cls. (1) to (4) as (i) to (iv), respectively, in cl. (iv), substituted "clause (i), (ii), or (iii)" for "clause (1), (2), or (3) of this paragraph", and struck out subsec. (d) which read as follows: "The term 'person' includes individuals, partnerships, corporations, and associations."

**EFFECTIVE DATE OF 2008 AMENDMENT**

Amendment of this section and repeal of Pub. L. 110-234 by Pub. L. 110-246 effective May 22, 2008, the date of enactment of Pub. L. 110-234, see section 4 of Pub. L. 110-246, set out as an Effective Date note under section 8701 of this title.

**§ 2303. Prohibited practices**

It shall be unlawful for any handler knowingly to engage or permit any employee or agent to engage in the following practices:

(a) To coerce any producer in the exercise of his right to join and belong to or to refrain from joining or belonging to an association of producers, or to refuse to deal with any producer because of the exercise of his right to join and belong to such an association; or

<sup>1</sup> So in original.