

**SUBJECT:** Including cuttings in citrus budwood and nursery stock certifications

**COMMITTEE:** Agriculture and Livestock — favorable, without amendment

**VOTE:** 9 ayes — Springer, Anderson, Beckley, Buckley, Burns, Fierro, Meza, Raymond, Zwiener  
0 nays

**SENATE VOTE:** On final passage, April 11 — 31-0, on Local and Uncontested Calendar

**WITNESSES:** *On House companion, HB 1489:*  
For — Alan Heinrich, Tree Town USA; (*Registered, but did not testify:*  
J Pete Laney, Texas Citrus Mutual; Marissa Patton, Texas Farm Bureau;  
Ryan Skrobarczyk, Texas Nursery and Landscape Association)  
  
Against — None  
  
On — Jessica Escobar, Texas Department of Agriculture

**BACKGROUND:** Agriculture Code ch. 19 establishes the citrus budwood and citrus nursery stock certification programs with the goal of producing healthy citrus trees free from pathogens and disease. Citrus budwood is defined as a part of a stem of branch of a citrus tree with buds used in propagation by budding or grafting. A citrus nursery is defined as a producer of citrus trees propagated through budding or grafting.

**DIGEST:** SB 979 would revise definitions of "citrus budwood" and "citrus nursery stock" to add cuttings as an acceptable form of propagation for the citrus budwood and citrus nursery stock certification programs.  
  
The bill would take immediate effect if finally passed by a two-thirds record vote of the membership of each house. Otherwise, it would take effect September 1, 2019.

**SUPPORTERS** Cuttings should be included as an accepted form of propagation for citrus.

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SAY: The use of cuttings allows for a producer to turn a crop much faster, and plants propagated from cuttings pose no more significant risk of disease infection than plants produced by budding or grafting.

OPPONENTS  
SAY: No concerns identified.