

Committee Substitute for
Committee Substitute for House Bill No. 719

An act relating to damage or destruction of agricultural products; creating s. 604.60, F.S.; providing that certain agricultural growers or producers shall have a right to recover damages as a result of willful and knowing damage or destruction of specified agricultural products; providing considerations and limits in award of damages; providing for costs and attorney's fees; amending s. 810.09, F.S.; prohibiting trespass upon specified legally posted agricultural sites; providing a penalty; reenacting ss. 260.0125(5)(b) and 810.011(5)(b), F.S., to incorporate the amendment to s. 810.09, F.S., in references thereto; providing an effective date.

Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

Section 1. Section 604.60, Florida Statutes, is created to read:

604.60 Damage or destruction of agricultural crops; civil action.—

(1) Any private, public, or commercial agricultural grower or producer who grows or produces any agricultural product, as defined in s. 468.382(7), for personal, research, or commercial purposes or for testing or research purposes in a product development program conducted in conjunction or coordination with a private research facility, a university, or any federal, state, or local government agency who suffers damages as a result of another person's willful and knowing damage or destruction of any such agricultural product has a cause of action for damages equal to double the amount of the value of the product damaged or destroyed, including the cost of any experimental product replication, and for any other relief a court of competent jurisdiction deems appropriate, including, but not limited to, compensatory and punitive damages. In awarding damages under this section, the courts shall consider the market value of the product prior to damage or destruction, and production, research, testing, replacement, and product development costs directly related to the product that has been damaged or destroyed as part of the value of the product. The prevailing party in any action brought pursuant to this section is entitled to an award of reasonable attorney's fees and court costs.

Section 2. Section 810.09, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

810.09 Trespass on property other than structure or conveyance.—

(1)(a) A person who, without being authorized, licensed, or invited, willfully enters upon or remains in any property other than a structure or conveyance:

1. As to which notice against entering or remaining is given, either by actual communication to the offender or by posting, fencing, or cultivation as described in s. 810.011; or

2. If the property is the unenclosed curtilage of a dwelling and the offender enters or remains with the intent to commit an offense thereon, other than the offense of trespass,

commits the offense of trespass on property other than a structure or conveyance.

(b) As used in this section, the term “unenclosed curtilage” means the unenclosed land or grounds, and any outbuildings, that are directly and intimately adjacent to and connected with the dwelling and necessary, convenient, and habitually used in connection with that dwelling.

(2)(a) Except as provided in this subsection, trespass on property other than a structure or conveyance is a misdemeanor of the first degree, punishable as provided in s. 775.082 or s. 775.083.

(b) If the offender defies an order to leave, personally communicated to the offender by the owner of the premises or by an authorized person, or if the offender willfully opens any door, fence, or gate or does any act that exposes animals, crops, or other property to waste, destruction, or freedom; unlawfully dumps litter on property; or trespasses on property other than a structure or conveyance, the offender commits a misdemeanor of the first degree, punishable as provided in s. 775.082 or s. 775.083.

(c) If the offender is armed with a firearm or other dangerous weapon during the commission of the offense of trespass on property other than a structure or conveyance, he or she is guilty of a felony of the third degree, punishable as provided in s. 775.082, s. 775.083, or s. 775.084. Any owner or person authorized by the owner may, for prosecution purposes, take into custody and detain, in a reasonable manner, for a reasonable length of time, any person when he or she reasonably believes that a violation of this paragraph has been or is being committed, and that the person to be taken into custody and detained has committed or is committing such violation. In the event a person is taken into custody, a law enforcement officer shall be called as soon as is practicable after the person has been taken into custody. The taking into custody and detention in compliance with the requirements of this paragraph does not result in criminal or civil liability for false arrest, false imprisonment, or unlawful detention.

(d) The offender commits a felony of the third degree, punishable as provided in s. 775.082, s. 775.083, or s. 775.084, if the property trespassed is a construction site that is legally posted and identified in substantially the following manner: “THIS AREA IS A DESIGNATED CONSTRUCTION SITE, AND ANYONE WHO TRESPASSES ON THIS PROPERTY COMMITS A FELONY.”

(e) The offender commits a felony of the third degree, punishable as provided in s. 775.082, s. 775.083, or s. 775.084, if the property trespassed upon is commercial horticulture property and the property is legally posted and identified in substantially the following manner: “THIS AREA IS DESIGNATED COMMERCIAL PROPERTY FOR HORTICULTURE PRODUCTS, AND ANYONE WHO TRESPASSES ON THIS PROPERTY COMMITS A FELONY.”

(f) The offender commits a felony of the third degree, punishable as provided in s. 775.082, s. 775.083, or s. 775.084, if the property trespassed upon is an agricultural site for testing or research purposes that is legally posted and identified in substantially the following manner: "THIS AREA IS A DESIGNATED AGRICULTURAL SITE FOR TESTING OR RESEARCH PURPOSES, AND ANYONE WHO TRESPASSES ON THIS PROPERTY COMMITS A FELONY."

(g)(f) Any person who in taking or attempting to take any animal described in s. 372.001(3) or (4), or in killing, attempting to kill, or endangering any animal described in s. 585.01(13) knowingly propels or causes to be propelled any potentially lethal projectile over or across private land without authorization commits trespass, a felony of the third degree, punishable as provided in s. 775.082, s. 775.083, or s. 775.084. For purposes of this paragraph, the term "potentially lethal projectile" includes any projectile launched from any firearm, bow, crossbow, or similar tensile device. This section shall not apply to any governmental agent or employee acting within the scope of his or her official duties.

(3) As used in this section, the term "authorized person" or "person authorized" means any owner, or his or her agent, or any law enforcement officer whose department has received written authorization from the owner, or his or her agent, to communicate an order to leave the property in the case of a threat to public safety or welfare.

Section 3. For the purpose of incorporating the amendment to section 810.09, Florida Statutes, in references thereto, the sections or subdivisions of Florida Statutes set forth below are reenacted to read:

260.0125 Limitation on liability of private landowners whose property is designated as part of the statewide system of greenways and trails.—

(5)

(b) Such notices must comply with s. 810.011(5) and shall constitute a warning to unauthorized persons to remain off the private property and not to depart from the designated greenway or trail. Any person who commits such an unauthorized entry commits a trespass as provided in s. 810.09.

810.011 Definitions.—As used in this chapter:

(5)

(b) It shall not be necessary to give notice by posting on any enclosed land or place not exceeding 5 acres in area on which there is a dwelling house in order to obtain the benefits of ss. 810.09 and 810.12 pertaining to trespass on enclosed lands.

Section 4. This act shall take effect October 1, 2001.

Approved by the Governor June 7, 2001.

Filed in Office Secretary of State June 7, 2001.