

**§ 1-539.2B. Triple damages for injury to agricultural commodities or production systems; define value of agricultural commodities grown for educational, testing, or research purposes.**

(a) Any person who unlawfully and willfully injures or destroys any other person's agricultural commodities or production system is liable to the owner for triple the value of the commodities or production system injured or destroyed.

(b) For purposes of this section, the value of agricultural commodities that are grown for educational, testing, or research purposes includes all of the following:

- (1) The diminution in market value of the commodities when the commodities were grown for sale and the plaintiff is the entity who sold the commodities or would have sold the commodities but for their injury or destruction.
- (2) Costs to the plaintiff for research and development of the injured or destroyed commodities.
- (3) Other incidental and consequential damages proven to have been incurred by the plaintiff.

(c) For the purpose of this section, the following definitions apply:

- (1) "Agricultural commodities" means:
  - a. Commodities produced for individual and public use, consumption, and marketing from one of the following:
    1. The cultivation of soil or hydroponics or any other method of production for crops, including fruits, vegetables, flowers, and ornamental plants.
    2. The planting and production of trees, timber, forests, or forest products.
    3. The raising of livestock, poultry, and eggs.
    4. Aquaculture as defined in G.S. 106-758.
  - b. Seed, genetic material, tissue cultures, and any research and development materials, information, and records related to items included in subdivision (1)a. of this subsection developed or used for educational, testing, or research purposes.
- (2) "Production systems" means land, buildings, and equipment used in the production of agricultural commodities, including aquaculture facilities as defined in G.S. 106-758. (2001-290, s. 1; 2021-78, s. 5(c).)