

Dear Committee Members,

My name is David Lively, and I currently serve the organic foods trade as Pioneer Emeritus at Oregon-based Organically Grown Company (OGC), board member of the Oregon Organic Coalition and board member of the Organic Trade Association. I have participated in the organic trade for over forty years, all of that time spent while a citizen of the great state of Oregon, where I determined to spend my life four decades ago.

I am writing to provide my support for SB 404-2, a bill that offers tremendous opportunity to support the rapidly growing organic sector of our food system.

In 1983, I was one of approximately a dozen growers who brought OGC into the marketplace as a full-line distributor of organic produce with an emphasis on local and regional production. In that first year, with two employees, OGC did just over \$100,000 gross. In 2020, OGC sales were over \$183,000,000, a movement of volume requiring a staff of over 250, most of whom live and work in Oregon.

During the 1990's, before accepting the position of OGC's VP of Sales and Marketing, I served the company as its Production Coordinator, working with dozens of farmers in the western U.S. to plan and execute their production programs, which provided me a clear view of the challenges they faced with limited support from extension, land-grant universities or policy makers. Mostly, they learned by doing, which in Northwest agriculture, with its relatively short seasons, can be a very tedious and drawn-out process. Fortunately, in the years since, the growth and positive impacts of the trade have resulted in greater support from farming-focused institutions.

SB404-2 offers us the chance to take that support to a new level, especially by directing the Oregon State University Extension Service to expand the Center for Small Farms and Community Food Systems by cluster hiring to fill five additional organic specialist positions. These specialists will provide Oregon's farmers with considerable and significant support as they transition land to organic practice and explore the further development of cropping systems that will provide profitable on-farm economies in the Pacific NW.

Respectfully, David Lively, Eugene, Oregon