

REVENUE: No revenue impact

FISCAL: Fiscal statement issued

Action:	Do Pass as Amended and Be Printed Engrossed and Be Referred to the Committee on Ways and Means by prior reference
Vote:	6 - 0 - 2
Yeas:	Frederick, Greenlick, Harker, Thompson, Gilliam, Tomei
Nays:	0
Exc.:	Parrish, Weidner
Prepared By:	Jennifer Kellar, Administrator
Meeting Dates:	3/21, 3/28

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES: Appropriates \$100,000 from the General Fund to the Oregon Health Authority (OHA) for the purposes of providing fresh Oregon-grown fruits, vegetables and herbs from farmers' markets and roadside stands to eligible low-income seniors under the Senior Farm Direct Nutrition Program (SFDNP). Declares emergency, effective July 1, 2011.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Program provides \$32 in the form of \$4 checks for low-income seniors
- Oregon currently serves approximately 56 percent of eligible seniors with Farm Direct checks
- History of Oregon's Senior Farm Direct Nutrition Program
- Positive impacts of program for farmers and recipients
- United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) ranks Oregon among top five states in the nation for the highest rate of hunger
- Program establishes and promotes healthy eating patterns
- Impact of Governor's Recommended Budget program reductions
- State funding reductions could result in potential loss of federal program dollars

EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT: Modifies measure to denote Oregon Health Authority as program administering agency.

BACKGROUND: The SFDNP is funded by the USDA, providing low-income, eligible seniors with dollars that can be used to purchase fresh Oregon grown fruit, vegetables and herbs. The checks can only be used at approved farm stands and farmers' markets. Additionally, the program is intended to improve nutrition for Oregon seniors and support local Oregon farmers, and can be used between June 1 and October 31 in the year the check is received. Eligibility criteria includes: seniors must be at least 60 years old by April 1 of the current year; be receiving either Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits or Medicaid on April 1 of the current year; have income below 135 percent of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL) in the current year; and be living in a situation where food is not provided for them, such as their own home or apartment.

Each spring, seniors are notified by mail if they are eligible to participate in the program. The USDA grant does not provide enough funding to provide benefits to every senior that is eligible; however seniors who choose to participate in the program will have their applications processed in the order received. Applications received after funding for the program has expired, are placed on a waiting list in the order received and if additional funds become available for the program, seniors on the waiting list will be notified.

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This summary has not been adopted or officially endorsed by action of the committee.