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February 25, 2013

The Honorable Chris Edwards and Ben Unger, Co-Chairs
Joint Ways and Means Subcommittee on Natural Resources
900 Court Street NE, 453
Salem, Oregon 97301

Dear Senator Edwards and Representative Unger:

On behalf of the Oregon Blueberry industry and its 315 producers, we would like to convey our support for the Oregon Department of Agriculture and its proposed budget that will be up for consideration by your Committee.

The blueberry industry is one of agriculture's most impressive success stories, with a value that now exceeds \$100 million. The Oregon Department of Agriculture has very much been a part of this success, often leading the way in helping develop new export markets. In 2012 Oregon was the first production region in the world that was granted access to export fresh blueberries to South Korea, very much the envy of our national industry.

The South Korean market would not be open to Oregon producers without the foresight and determination of ODA's Marketing and Commodity Inspection Divisions. Chile, Canada, Washington and California are all following our lead and trying to achieve what we've accomplished.

Under Director Katy Coba's leadership, it continues to be a pleasure to be a part of common sense management that leverages minimal general fund resources with Federal grant dollars.

I've had the opportunity to accompany the Oregon Department of Agriculture on several trade missions, most recently to Korea in November 2012. Our Department of Agriculture operates at the highest levels of foreign national governments and successfully works to bring the money of our export partners back to Oregon to the benefit of our general economy.

Our industry encourages you to support the Oregon Department of Agriculture's budget and help keep their valuable efforts working for Oregon.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bryan Ostlund". The signature is fluid and cursive, written over a white background.

Bryan Ostlund,
Administrator

