



February 28, 2013

Ways & Means, Natural Resources SubCommittee
Co-Chairs, Senator Edwards, Representative Unger

RE: SB 5002, Oregon Department of Agriculture Budget

Agriculture is Oregon's second largest trade sector. Oregon Department of Agriculture's (ODA) services and regulatory programs are essential to our community's success. Our farmers, ranchers and processors compete in a worldwide market, and many of ODA's programs are needed to maintain a competitive advantage.

Oregon Department of Agriculture is a well-managed agency and is fiscally responsible with their general fund dollars and industry paid fees. Oregon Farm Bureau supports the Governor's proposed budget for the Oregon Department of Agriculture. We would also like to submit the following comments regarding the proposed budget.

- A. **Weed Control - Noxious weeds displace and compete with native and desirable domestic plant species.** These invasive plants affect all Oregonians, either directly or indirectly, through impacts on agricultural and forest economies and on other resources such as fish, wildlife, recreation and overall watershed health. Oregon Farm Bureau requests the two field positions cut in the Governor's Budget be restored.
- B. **Water Quality Monitoring Package:** It is important for the agency to maintain monitoring work that was established in 2011. The state and agriculture community are investing in water quality improvements; it is critical that we know where progress is being made and where work still needs to be done.
- C. **Wolf Compensation Program:** It is important to give local communities some financial assistance for living with wolves. Some areas of the state are experiencing hardships due to reintroduction and do not have the regulatory tool for management relief.
- D. **Pesticide Stewardship Program:** Oregon Farm Bureau is supportive of the expansion of the stewardship program. We appreciate the fact that it is data based and a collaborative program. Our support of the program hinges on the balance of it being funded half by general fund and half by registration fees. The base pesticide program is funded solely by registration and permit fees; we cannot jeopardize the core mission by adding a new program.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. I am happy to answer any questions.