

Testimony of Ken Bailey, Orchard View Farms
Chair ODA Ag Water Quality Advisory Committee

Ways and Means Natural Resources Subcommittee
February 28th from 1-2:30pm in H-170

My name is Ken Bailey and I am a cherry grower from The Dalles and a past chair and member of the Oregon State Board of Agriculture. I am currently serving as Chair of the Oregon Department of Agriculture's Ag Water Quality Advisory Committee.

I am here to give support to the entire Oregon Department of Agriculture's Budget and to specifically support a couple of the packages in the budget related to water quality.

The first package is the Pesticide Stewardship Partnership budget package which supports a very successful program that brings together varied interests to quickly resolve water quality issues without having to wait through the bureaucratic process of developing rules and regulations and enforcement procedures. These partnerships, made up of various state agencies, farm groups and environmental groups have quickly identified water quality problems in order to immediately begin to develop and implement solutions rather than regulations. We have found that within 1-2 years of identifying high pesticide levels dramatic reductions in those levels can be achieved.

It can take up to 5-10 years to go through the regulatory process of developing rules and enforcement policies and this is a very expensive process and is almost always a controversial process.

Money spent early with Pesticide Stewardship Partnerships will get much quicker and much greater results in the water where it really counts. It has also created better relationships among the participating parties which have also proved to be of great benefit to all.

The second package is the monitoring budget package for the ODA Water Quality Program. Monitoring is essential to identify water quality problems and to measure the effectiveness of the completed projects that are done with the goal to improve water quality. Without monitoring we cannot properly assess the cost benefit ratio of our efforts to improve water quality.

In reality these two budget packages work together and are essential to each other. Monitoring is where we get the data to begin a Pesticide Stewardship Partnership and monitoring is needed to measure the effectiveness of any implemented solution.

The bottom line is that we will see much better results with collaboration in voluntary programs that identify solutions that work for everyone and get us the greater benefits with less dollars spent.