

**TO:** Co-Chairs Devlin and Rayfield, and members of the Ways and Means Sub-Committee on Natural Resources

**FROM:** Rod Friesen  
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**RE:** Written testimony in support of Governor's Recommended Budget for the Oregon Department of Agriculture

Dear Co-Chairs Devlin and Rayfield, and Members of the Ways and Means Sub-Committee on Natural Resources,

For the record, my name is Rod Friesen. I am the Director of Sales & Marketing at Truitt Family Foods in Salem, Oregon. I am here in support of the Governor's Recommended Budget for the Oregon Department of Agriculture.

Truitt has utilized the services of ODA, particularly the marketing program over many years and for a variety of reasons. Over the past 43 years, Truitt has benefited from ODA marketing services to help grow our local, regional and international sales through in-bound and out-bound missions as well as addressing food processing issues.

Most recently, in 2013 Truitt Brothers which had been in operation in Salem for 40 years evolved into two separate entities. Truitt Brothers Inc. develops co-packed products and Truitt Family Foods developed branded products with a consumer focus in both consumer and retail markets.

Over the past year and a half Truitt Family Foods has developed an innovative line of all natural, shelf-stable hummus and white bean puree dippers that are ideal for the retail and airline market, and most significantly for the K-12 school food market. The work ODA has done in developing the K-12 markets through the farm to school program, Specialty Crop Block Grant projects, and related activities, has transformed school lunch in Oregon, and as a result nationally.

For example, based on the most recent USDA Farm to School Census, Oregon schools lead the country in the percent of school food money that is spent on local foods. This is a testament to the significance of a state legislative body that is supportive of farm to school, alongside the local market development activities of the state agency and partners in the public and private sectors.

In fact the strides in the K12 farm to school market and simultaneous changes in the distribution system supported by ODA activities has fueled the way we think about all of our markets, and how we position ourselves within them. The strength of the K12 market at home and across the country has given us the signal we needed to create the new line of K12 market ready hummus and bean dips. For the foreseeable future, that new line of products will be a very important part of our business.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today. I would be happy to answer any questions.