



Pacific Northwest Christmas Tree Association

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February 20, 2017

The Honorable Lew Frederick and Honorable Brad Witt
Co-Chairmen
Joint Committee on Ways and Means SubCommittee on Natural Resources
900 Court Street NE, Room H-178
Salem, Oregon 97301

Re: Support of the Oregon Department of Agriculture's Budget Request

Dear Senator Frederick and Representative Witt:

The Pacific Northwest Christmas Tree Association represents more than 600 Oregon Christmas tree growers and Oregon continues to be the largest state of Christmas tree production in the U.S.

One of the key elements of our success is our strong relationship with the Oregon Department of Agriculture and the professional nature of how they manage plant insect protection programs.

More than 90 percent of the trees we harvest leave Oregon. Without our ability to assure our market buyers, both here in the U.S. and in international export markets, our ability to move trees would be greatly restricted. Shipping destinations of all varieties continue to be increasingly sensitive to the movement of plant material and risks it can represent if not managed properly.

As an industry, we are concerned that continuous budget constraints will jeopardize Oregon's ability to adequately and efficiently protect our natural and agricultural resources.

The pace of plant diseases and insect pest infestations continues to increase and is a very real and costly threat to Oregon industries like ours, and our environment in general.

We strongly encourage you and this Committee to support the budget requests of the Oregon Department of Agriculture. Having worked with this industry for nearly 30 years, I can honestly say that without the professional services the ODA provides there very likely would not be an Oregon Christmas tree industry.

Thank you for your consideration and continued support of the Oregon Department of Agriculture.

Sincerely,

Bryan Ostlund,
Executive Director