



House Committee on Agriculture and Land Use  
Oregon State Capitol  
900 Court Street NE  
Salem, Oregon 97301

December 16, 2020

Chair Clem and Members of the Committee:

My name is Megan Kemple, I am the Director of the Oregon Farm to School and School Garden Network, representing over 1600 farm to school and school garden stakeholders in Oregon, who work to incorporate healthy, local food into school meals and provide farm and garden based education.

The Oregon Farm to School grants support these efforts. Thank you, all, for your support for the Program in the past.

Thank you also for your interest in hearing about the mid-biennium grant reductions, and their impact on Oregon's farm to school community. The cuts were significant and I know they were difficult for the legislature to make. Although the Program was well funded last legislative session, the loss of 1/3 of the grant funds, mid-biennium had a huge impact on the Program. At a time when both producers and schools were facing huge challenges with COVID, they lost critical resources. Grants to producers to increase their capacity to sell to schools were significantly reduced, making less funding available to award. And \$4.5 million were cut from the Procurement Grants, which make purchases of Oregon foods possible. Most of this funding had already been awarded, so school districts and other sponsors who had existing awards, had their grants reduced or in many cases, eliminated.

Because they hadn't received much outreach or support yet and were new to the program, there was significant impact to Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) sites, which includes Head Start and other early learning centers. Most stand-alone Head Start and early learning centers lost their funding entirely, so these cuts had a disproportionate impact on our most vulnerable young children.

Several producers and farm to school support organizations will speak to the impact of these reductions on their businesses and communities. Thank you again, for your interest in hearing from them. Please let me know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Megan Kemple". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

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