



FRY FAMILY FARM

Certified Organic

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

December 12, 2020

Chair Clem and Members of the Committee:

Fry Family Farm has been selling to schools for over seven years, since 2012. During that time, we have gained a lot of experience working with local and regional schools. We were one of the first farms in Oregon to be accepted into the DoD Fresh/Unprocessed Fruit & Vegetable Pilot Program. Our most recent customers include, over 25 schools and six school districts including: Medford School District, Phoenix/Talent School district, Ashland School District, Central Point, Eagle Point and Grants Pass School District. In addition, we have worked with other local farms to solve some shipping logistics for school procurement. Over the last seven years, we have grown and sold a large volume of product to our local schools. We are one of the only producers in this region to be GAP certified and registered with the Pilot Program, and have over 29 vegetables eligible to sell to schools. In the 2019 year, we sold over 50,000 pounds of vegetables; ranging from tomatoes, peppers, cucumbers, squash, pumpkins and more.

If we would have received funding through the ODA Farm to School Infrastructure and Equipment Grant for new equipment our farm could have expand our acreage, lengthened the season, increase the scale of production, and availability of organic vegetables that schools are requesting. This would have allowed us to start working land sooner and later in the season. Without the proper equipment we are were not able to plant all the needed crops, and as a result, our availability list for the school districts has been very minimal. This farm expansion is one that we have wanted to do for some time, but, ironically, our farm size has limited us. We have had 10 plus acres sitting fallow with beautiful cover crop because we have had no way to add it into the crop rotation. Without this significant upgrade we may need to give up leased acreage because we just can't keep it in production. Fry Family Farm manages around 90 acres, and this crucial piece of equipment would have allowed us to increase our school sales by 50% over 2 years.

Our ability to offer additional school districts produce, expand our school sales and crop availability ended when we didn't receive the producer grants. With the reduction in procurement grants to the schools our sales dropped by almost a third. This was a significant hit as we lost almost all restaurant sales and had a huge reduction in our farmers' market sales this year as well.



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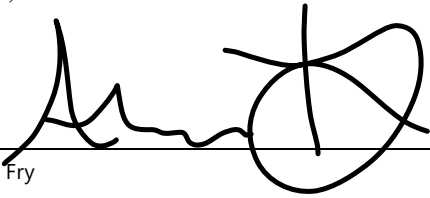
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It is so important to continue the Farm to School Grant funding in the future. Our business and your community depend on this food and funding, especially in the face of rising food insecurity and the need for support for economic recovery. This is money well spent, every dollar impacts the farmers, their employees, the wellbeing of our community and the partnerships formed with our local Farm to School nonprofits.

Thank you for your service.

Signed,

X



Amber Fry
General Manager

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