

**TESTIMONY FOR SB 241
SENATE ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE
SUBMITTED BY KATIE PEARMINE
FEBRUARY 5, 2019**



Oregon Food Bank supports SB 241 to renew and raise the Oregon Crop Donation Tax Credit. Our mission is to eliminate hunger and its root causes...because no one should be hungry. Oregon Food Bank believes that hunger starves not just the body, but also the human spirit. In 2017, an estimated 1 in 7 Oregonians experienced food insecurity, too many for a state that is blessed with farmers willing to donate. However, donating crops is not easy. It is a complicated logistical process that involves several factors including financial costs, which is why this tax credit is so important.

Communities thrive when people are nourished with healthy and fresh food. The Crop Donation Tax Credit helps increase the availability of Oregon grown produce, which the Oregon Food Bank Network then distributes to food insecure households. Our network of 5 Oregon Food Bank branches and 17 regional food bank partners is a powerful force in the fight against hunger. By working together, last year we collectively distributed approximately 100 million pounds of food to over 1,200 distribution points in communities throughout Oregon and Clark County, Washington.

Oregon Food Bank is near the end of our 5-year strategic plan, which includes a goal of increasing the amount of fresh produce distributed from 10 million to 15 million pounds annually. We are happy to say that we are on track to meet this goal. Oregon Food Bank commits our own resources to cover the costs of repackaging bulk produce in a form easy for local pantries to give to families. We also often offer a small "pick and pack out" fee for farmers – to cover labor, packaging and/or storage costs – making it easier for farmers to donate. Donated fresh produce, combined with other food industry donations and foods we purchase regularly, allows us to offer a complete nutritious combination of foods to the families we serve. The Oregon Crop Donation Tax credit helps facilitate these donations. With the help of this tax credit, we're able to move millions of pounds of Oregon apples, potatoes, onions, pears, cherries, cucumbers, watermelons, summer seasonal crops, root crops, winter squash and more; to those who need it the most.

Renewing and raising the Oregon Crop Donation Tax Credit means we can continue to increase the percentage of healthy fresh produce to people experiencing hunger. It gives the Oregon Food Bank Network a tool in our toolbox to work with both small and large growers throughout the state, ensuring consistent access to fresh produce to the people we serve throughout the year.

Thank you very much for your time and consideration.

Katie Pearmine
Strategic Sourcing Manager
Oregon Food Bank

oregonfoodbank.org

Oregon Food Bank
Headquarters - Portland
7900 NE 33rd Drive
Portland, OR 97211-1918
503-282-0555

Oregon Food Bank -
Washington County Services
1870 NW 173rd Avenue
Beaverton, OR 97006-0817
503-439-6510

Oregon Food Bank -
Tillamook County Services
PO Box 1344
Tillamook, OR 97141-1344
503-842-3154

Oregon Food Bank -
Southeast Oregon Services
773 S Oregon Street
Ontario, OR 97914-3914
541-889-9206

