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February 21, 2019

**Testimony Supporting SB 727
Senate Committee on Human Services**

Chair Gelser, Members of the Committee,

Friends of Family Farmers represents small and mid-sized family farmers across Oregon. We work to build strong local and regional food systems and to ensure that family-scale agriculture remains viable in our state today and into the future.

We are writing today to urge you to pass SB 727, a bill to support the expansion of Double Up Food Bucks SNAP match programs in Oregon. Double of Food Bucks is an incentive program that helps low-income Oregonians eligible for the Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP) to access fruits and vegetables directly from local farmers. This program is a win-win, providing increased access to healthy food for low-income Oregonians, while supporting family farms in the state.

To date, Double Up Food Bucks and SNAP match initiatives have only been available at individual farmers markets where funding has existed. The impact has been substantial, but limited in geographic scope. SB 727 would provide the funding necessary to take these successful programs statewide and ensure accessibility to a larger number of low-income Oregonians as well as participating farmers. Currently, SNAP matching programs exist at roughly half of Oregon's farmers markets. This leaves a significant number of farmers markets – many of those in more rural areas - without any SNAP incentive program.

The \$3 million in funding proposed in SB 727 would support the expansion of Double Up Food Bucks SNAP incentives to all 120 farmers markets in the state. Technical assistance will help farmers markets that are not currently registered to accept SNAP to obtain the required technology. For areas not served by farmers markets, this program will also expand into select grocery stores, allowing for greater access to fresh fruits and vegetables to low income Oregonians.

We urge your support for SB 727.

Thank you for your consideration,

Ivan Maluski
Policy Director