

Senator Lew Frederick and Representative Susan McClain,

I am writing in support of continued funding of fermentation sciences at OSU. As a graduate of Oregon State University's agricultural business program, and an executive of Kraemer Farms, my family's multigenerational farm and a large commercial wine grape growing operation, I can personally attest to the value of fermentation sciences from both an educational and economic standpoint.

As an agricultural business student at OSU I personally benefited from the fermentation sciences program by way of the Oregon Wine Research Institute. Going into college I knew I wanted to pursue a degree in ag business, but I was as-yet unsure what area of agriculture I wanted to go into. Early-on in college I took an introductory course regarding beer, wine and spirits, which was supported by research conducted by OWRI. I was also able to undertake an internship at Columbia Winery in Sunnyside, Washington, as a part of my degree program at OSU, an experience which only further solidified my interest in the wine industry. Funding for fermentation sciences at OSU had a demonstrable impact on the course of my education, a statement which I am certain holds true for a great many graduates and current students of OSU. And even after leaving OSU I have received educational benefits from fermentation sciences and OWRI: just recently I attended a vineyard mechanization workshop in Medford and attended Grape Day at OSU, both of which were sponsored by OWRI. The cumulative benefits of the fermentation sciences program which I've experienced are considerable, and by no means am I unusual in this regard.

On a professional level, support for OWRI and fermentation sciences has had an even more profound impact upon myself and my family's farm, Kraemer Farms. The Kraemer family has operated farms in the Willamette Valley for four generations; for most of that time we focused upon traditional row crops (broccoli, cauliflower, bell peppers, zucchini, etc.) and cane berries, but starting around 1990 we began moving into wine grape production. When my grandfather and father first began planting vineyards, research conducted by OWRI and funded by the fermentation science program was invaluable, and undoubtedly made our operation viable in its early days. While they were both skilled farmers, wine grapes are a different beast than green beans, and guidance was required—guidance ultimately provided by OWRI. Without robust funding for fermentation sciences, and the resultant wealth of research into growing wine grapes, it is unclear whether or not our vineyard division would have survived its infancy. Today, my brother and I have largely taken over vineyard operations, following the passing of both our grandfather and father, and OWRI continues to be an extremely important resource for us. When we consider issues such as how to approach pest control, what grape varieties to begin planting, where they ought to be planted and how they ought to be cared for, among many other topics, we turn to research conducted by OWRI. The success of our vineyard division has been considerable, to the extent that wine grape sales now make up the majority of our

annual revenues, and access to a robust body of research has been and will continue to be a key to our success.

Given our experience with OWRI, I have no doubt that it has been similarly beneficial to other wine-related businesses, both wineries and other commercial growers. The Oregon wine industry contributed \$3.35 billion to Oregon's economy last year, and while it is impossible for me to say precisely how much of that ought to be directly attributed to support for the fermentation sciences program at OSU, I am certain that whatever funding has been provided to OWRI in the past has more than paid for itself, probably many times over. It would be a shame if the vital resources provided by OWRI to the Oregon wine industry were to be diminished or even lost entirely. Our business would certainly feel a negative impact for losing those resources, and the wine industry at large would as well.

Furthermore, and speaking more broadly about the benefits of generous funding for the fermentation sciences program, the growth of the craft brewing industry has also provided Kraemer Farms with new business opportunities. For example, a Salem-based brewery, Vagabond, recently contracted with us to provide black raspberries for a special brewing project, thereby increasing the possible value of our non-vineyard crops. Another Salem brewery, Gilgamesh, produced "A Bandon Brew," a beer made with Bandon cranberries and aged in Pinot Noir port barrels, while Santiam Brewing created "Pirate Stout," a beer aged in rum barrels. This sort of cross-pollination between the wine, beer and spirits industries in Oregon is only possible thanks to the simultaneous growth of all three industries, which itself can be fairly attributed to funding provided to fermentation sciences. For farmers, it means the possibility of selling their crops for better prices and building new business relationships, and for the wine, beer and spirits industries it means the further elevation of Oregon's reputation as a producer of high-quality and innovative products. Without the support provided by fermentation sciences funding, it is unclear if these sorts of innovations would continue to occur.

In short, funding for fermentation sciences has opened a great many doors for both myself, Kraemer Farms, and a great many other businesses across the state. I urge your appropriations committee to regard the full-funding of fermentation sciences as an indispensable part of the success of Oregon fermentation industries thus far, as a necessary element of their continued success, and as an engine of further innovation which will enable the Oregon wine and craft brewing industries to continue to thrive.

Best wishes,
Austin Kraemer
Vineyard and Contract Manager
Kraemer Farms

