



February 1, 2021

House Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee
900 Court Street
Salem, OR 97301

Re: HB 2612 and safety standards for unpasteurized dairy products

Chair Witt and Members of the Committee,

Oregon Dairy Farmers Association is the voice for dairy operations around our state. Our producers are family operations who support some of our state's most well-known and beloved brands and provide nutritional dairy products to our homes, schools, restaurants and beyond. We represent small dairies, large dairies, organic and traditional producers and other industry partners.

In Oregon, we have very high standards for our dairy producers. We are regulated under the PMO – Pasteurized Milk Ordinance and the National FARM Program. Oregon Department of Agriculture closely monitors our food inspection and safety programs, and bears responsibility for managing recalls in the unfortunate circumstance of contamination, adulteration or impurity. Individual processors also have their own inspections and additional requirements imposed internally or through the private supply chain. These structures and processes are the backbone of protecting public health and the integrity of our food supply.

As a collective of responsible producers, we know first-hand the risks we all face in the event of a food safety issue implicating dairy products. While organic, traditional, and un-pasteurized products are distinct definitions well-known in our industry, in the event of a health problem with a dairy product, we all become the face of such problems. We aim to provide assurances to Oregonians that our products are the highest quality and safe.

We understand the desire of some small producers and their markets to have access to raw products, including butter. We also understand the value of pasteurization and combating micro-organisms in retail products.

We urge the committee to carefully consider the oversight and regulation of products such as raw butter. HB 2612 rightly directs the Oregon Department of Agriculture to oversee any marketing of raw butter and develop appropriate standards and accountability. We look forward to contributing to any discussions with ODA and others about the risks and structure for selling or distributing unpasteurized dairy products, and hope you will consider these factors in your deliberations regarding HB 2612.

Thank you,

Tami Kerr
Executive Director