



Joint Committee On Ways and Means, Subcommittee On Natural Resources
Oregon State Capitol
900 Court Street NE
Salem, Oregon 97301

April 21, 2021

Co-chairs Taylor and Reardon and members of the Committee:

I am writing on behalf of the Oregon Farm to School and School Garden Network to express our strong support for, and request your support for funding for, Oregon Department of Agriculture's (ODA) Agriculture Marketing and Development Program (ADMP), which should be included in ODA's budget in [SB 5502](#).

The Oregon Farm to School and School Garden Network (OFSSGN) connects and supports members of Oregon's farm to school community to provide access to healthy, local food in school meals and food, farm and garden education. ODA's Farm to School Program Manager, within the ADMP has been an extremely valuable resource to producers as they enter the school food market place, as well as a strong partner for the farm to school movement overall.

The ADMP has incurred regular reductions in staff and program funding over the years. ODA is seeking to rebuild ADMP's domestic marketing and promotion capacity. To support this, ADMP has reorganized its limited staff to assist:

- Local producers to enter local food service and retail, such as direct to consumer, farmers markets, and farm to school procurement.
- Small and medium producers to grow into larger regional supply chains.
- Businesses to market and promote in national markets.
- Businesses and exporters with technical issues related to transportation, logistics, and market access constraints.
- Exporters to reach foreign buyers and promote in foreign markets.

We would like to see adequate funding for programs which support regional market development. The Governor's Recommended Budget provides ADMP with \$430,000 to promote Oregon agriculture in local and national markets, such as:

- develop local agriculture, food, and beverage businesses
- aid those that seek to grow into larger distribution channels; and
- expand to national markets

We would also like urge the legislature's support for positions and programs promoting equity:

- Pkg 130 – Agency Equity Officer \$256,319 GF: Requests a position to better serve ODA's diverse agricultural and food sectors along with the associated customer base.
- Pkg 090 — Diversity in Ag Grant Program \$1,000,000 GF: Adds funding for creating Diversity in Agriculture Market Access through a new grant program.

Please prioritize these programs as you allocate funds to ODA's budget in [SB 5502](#).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Megan Kemple". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Megan Kemple, Director
Oregon Farm to School and School Garden Network