



Friends of Family Farmers ♦ PO Box 665 Waltherville, OR 97489

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April 22, 2021

**Testimony Regarding 5555
Joint Committee on Ways and Means
Invest in Regional Food System Resilience**

Dear Co-Chairs Sen. Johnson and Sen. Steiner Hayward, Rep. Rayfield, and Members of the Committee:

I am writing on behalf of [Friends of Family Farmers \(FoFF\)](http://www.FriendsofFamilyFarmers.org), a farmer-led non-profit that has advocated for family-scale farmers for over 15 years. Friends of Family Farmers would like to urge you to please include infrastructure and other investments that increase food security in the budget. **The pandemic brought into sharp focus the need for shorter supply chains and regional food system resilience.**

While the light at the end of the Covid-19 tunnel is visible, Oregon still faces climate and other weather emergencies that unfortunately, likely will only increase in severity and frequency. Investments in regional food and farming systems that actually feed our communities nourishing food will also create rural economic development and improved health outcomes for Oregon.

Please consider including:

- **HB2785A** – Grant fund to increase **small scale meat processing** capacity. There are 4-7 “shovel ready” projects that need investment. (\$10 million; can be funded with ARPA)
- **SB 404A – Oregon Organic Action Plan**, which will dramatically help expand organic production through expanding OSU Extension Services for organic production. (~\$1.5 million)
- **SB 555** – Double Up Food Bucks is a win for families and farmers and every SNAP dollar spent at a farmers market can generate \$1.79 in local economic activity. (\$4 million with Federal Match available)
- **HB 2835 – Benefits Navigator** Support college students, many of whom are parents, to access food and basic needs by establishing on-campus navigators. (\$4.9 million)
- **HB 2833 & HB 2834 - Oregon Hunger Task Force** Updates statute so that membership better reflects people with lived experiences of hunger and communities most impacted. (\$150,000)
- **Agriculture and Land Access Allocation for BIPOC Farmers** The Emergency Relief for Farmers of Color Act seeks to support farmers through technical assistance & infrastructure, direct relief payments for farm loans, and funding for projects to improve land access and acquisition. (\$4 million)
- **Oregon Agricultural Heritage Program** Protect agricultural lands for the benefit of Oregon’s economy, communities, and landscapes. Program is ready to receive funding, and farmers, ranchers, and land trusts are ready to deploy it. (\$10 million; can be funded with ARPA)

- **Farm to School** – Provides grants for reimbursement of purchases of Oregon-grown and processed foods for farm and garden-based education. (\$15 million)
- **Farm Direct Nutrition Program** – Provides vouchers for additional fruits and vegetables for WIC participants and Seniors. (\$1.2 million with Federal Match available)
- **Oregon Hunger Response Fund** – Supports food distribution to nearly 1,400 food pantries and other local emergency food agencies in communities across Oregon. (\$4.7 million)

Thank you for your consideration and please reach out with any questions—I am happy to serve as a resource for food systems issues.

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