



February 9, 2021

Senate Committee On Natural Resources and Wildfire Recovery
900 Court Street NE, Room 453
Salem, OR 97301

RE: SB 33 - Food Safety Program Fees

Chair Golden and Members of the Committee,

The Oregon Dairy Farmers Association represents the nearly 200 multi-generational dairy farm families working every day to bring fluid milk to market that consumers enjoy in their morning coffee, or in processed forms as cheese, yogurt and ice cream. Our dairy farms range in size and structure across the state. The end product is healthy, nutritious and contributes to both the economy and the environment.

Our producers work directly with Oregon Department of Agriculture inspectors, and of course, indirectly as products move to wholesalers, retailers and restaurants. The Food Safety Program is critical to ensuring Oregonians trust the processing, preparation and sale of the products they consume, and are safe from foodborne illness. Dairy producers are an important partner along the supply chain in delivering products that are not contaminated or mislabeled.

The underlying program is important to our members and Oregonians at-large and must be adequately funded. Our producers have agreed in the past and will continue to agree to pay fees to allow for food safety inspection. For these reasons, we will be working with the Way & Means Committee to ensure that appropriate general fund resources are allocated to the Food Safety Program, before moving to a position on the authorization for increases to the fee structure.

The fee structure proposed SB 33 is a steep change during a difficult period for our producers. As crafted, we oppose the currently bill, but invite constructive conversations about the appropriate increases in fees coupled with sufficient general fund appropriation to the Food Safety program. Ideally, we work back towards a 50/50 split between the general fund portion and the fee-funded portion of the program.

We oppose SB 33 but look forward to working with your colleagues to continue to protect the integrity of the food safety system for Oregonians.

Thank you,

Tami Kerr
Executive Director