

My name is Mary Colombo. I am a farm owner and operator of Wild Roots Farm in Troutdale, Oregon. I am writing to request your support for SB 440 and 555.

SB 555 and SB 440 support the expansion of Double Up Food Bucks Oregon, a SNAP incentive program with a proven record of success. For every dollar spent on SNAP eligible foods at participating farmers markets, farm share programs, and grocery stores across the state, shoppers will receive a dollar to spend on Oregon grown fruits and vegetables.

This program is important to me because it allows members who experiencing financial hardship to have access to our produce. Last year, we had more members than ever before pay for a CSA share using SNAP and DUFB. Some of these CSA members paying with SNAP and DUFB were our friends who lost their jobs due to Covid. Our business was greatly impacted by Covid since we were 90 percent restaurant sales pre Covid. When all the restaurants closed in March, we had to rapidly transition to a CSA model. Since we are able to except SNAP and DUFB benefits, we were able to sell more shares since so many people were, and still are, experiencing financial hardship. The families who received our CSA through SNAP this year were able to bring home locally grown, nutrient dense food to sustain them through a pandemic thanks to this program. There would have been a lot more food insecure families in Oregon and much more strain on other organizations like the Oregon Food Bank without this program. By allowing consumers to use their SNAP and DUFB to purchase direct from farms in their community, it keeps money in the local economy and helped businesses like ours survive a very challenging year. We greatly rely on this program and so do a lot of our members. We saw an increase in 2020 of SNAP and DUFB paying members and I'm sure we will see the same trend this year. Our farm has more inquiries than ever before about being able to purchase a CSA using SNAP. Being able to offer DUFB on top of that is always a huge relief for potential members and in some cases pushes them to invest in our farm.

Thank you for the consideration and for your service.

Mary Colombo
Wild Roots Farm
Troutdale Oregon