



Oregon Farmers Markets Association
595 15th St NE
Salem, OR 97301

February 25, 2021

Chair Williams and Members of the Committee,

I am writing on behalf of the Oregon Farmers Markets Association (OFMA), the membership-based organization representing the majority of our state's over 120 farmers market locations. I am writing to request your support for HB 2292.

HB 2292 supports 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 crucial for Oregon's farmers markets because it benefits both the farmers and the families in the communities they serve. Families benefit from the increased purchasing power DUFb brings them, helping them access fresh, healthy, locally grown food products; and farmers benefit from the increased spending at their booths. A growing number of markets are able to offer DUFb to their customers, with at least 56 of our members participating, according to a recent survey. An added benefit of DUFb is that markets, knowing that DUFb SNAP-matching funds exist, have new incentives to adopt SNAP processing capabilities at their markets so that they can become DUFb participants.

A small technical assistance piece of this program, funded through last biennium's version of these bills, allows OFMA to provide assistance to markets aiming to obtain or preserve the ability to process SNAP benefits at their market. Staff walk market operators through the complicated process of registering with FNS, selecting software and equipment, setting up and using the systems, etc. This program has succeeded in increasing the number of SNAP-accepting markets to 98 locations in Oregon in 2020, an all-time high. According to a recent survey, 86 of those 98 locations reported approx \$860K in SNAP sales, even before DUFb incentives were applied - which is a lot of food on Oregon family tables and a lot of money in farmers' bank accounts! This is especially important during this period of ongoing, COVID-related economic uncertainty. This SNAP-acceptance pathway provides a healthy pipeline for markets in preparing to adopt and utilize the DUFb program (\$385,531 DUFb

incentives distributed in 2020), which would not be possible without this type of state investment.

Farmers markets in Oregon have been incredibly persistent and innovative since COVID arrived in Spring of 2020 - re-envisioning market layouts, shifting operations, providing sanitizers and PPE, etc. - all in an effort to keep their communities safe AND fed and their vendors in business. While their efforts have been impressive and effective, preserving the “core “ of their vendor businesses and customer base, they are still experiencing a big hit. Survey data tells us that gross sales, vendor participation and visitorship is down by half, on average, statewide. These valuable institutions deserve our investment to remain viable in the long-term, and DUFBI is a smart way to invest: filling the tables of families experiencing food insecurity while also supporting local farmers.

In conclusion, the DUFBI program is good for farmers, good for farmers markets and good for families. The expansion of SNAP matching funds and technical assistance this program can provide is much-needed to help farmers and farmers market shoppers weather the effects of COVID on our sector. We urge you to give it strong consideration

Thank you,
Sincerely,



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

Kelly Crane, Executive Director
Oregon Farmers Markets Association