

SUBCOMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

Item 52: Department of Agriculture Resilient Food Systems

To: Ways and Means Full Committee
From: Natural Resources Subcommittee
Carrier: Senator Dembrow

The Natural Resources Subcommittee recommends that the Joint Interim Committee on Ways and Means recommend including an increase of \$4.5 million in Federal Funds expenditure limitation and authorizing the establishment of two limited duration positions for the Department of Agriculture in a budget reconciliation bill during the 2024 legislative session to support resilient food systems, specialty crops, and food safety.

The expenditure limitation is related to two U.S. Department of Agriculture grants, for which the Oregon Department of Agriculture previously received legislative approval to apply. The first grant is from the Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program, which partners with states to strengthen infrastructure in the middle of the supply chain for farm and food businesses. Federal Funds expenditure limitation of \$3.7 million and two limited duration positions will support the issuance of sub-grants to eligible Oregon businesses.

The second grant is from the Specialty Crop Block Grant Program, which is already supported in the Department's budget. However, the 2022 award amount exceeded the level estimated during 2023-25 budget development process and an increase of \$800,000 in Federal Funds expenditure limitation is necessary to spend the available revenue.

The Natural Resources Subcommittee recommends approval.