

Madam Chair and Members of this committee,

My name is Daniel Chin, a third generation of potato farmers in the Klamath Basin. I am testifying for your support of Bill SCR 3, which would designate the potato as the official state vegetable of Oregon.

Our family has been producing potatoes in the Klamath Basin for 92 years. I can still hear my grandfather's belief that America is the "Land of Opportunity." He gave us that opportunity to make and grow a very successful potato business – growing and marketing potatoes. My wife Dee Dee and I were both raised on potato farms and for 52 years have been raising all kinds of varieties of potatoes – russets, reds, yellows, purples and six different types of fingerlings, mostly organic with some conventional. Whole Foods nationwide has been one of our best customers for organic potatoes. Though our best crop we have been raising is three children and they in turn gave us great fun and pleasure with 10 grandchildren, that we get to spoil with all kinds of potatoes.

I have been involved with local, state, and national potato groups for the last 45 years including the Klamath Potato Growers and Shippers, promoting Oregon potatoes in the San Francisco area, and started as the Klamath Representative on the Oregon Potato Commission in 1986, later becoming the Chairman in 1992.

In 1992, China opened the first McDonalds in Shenzhen, China, just north of Hong Kong. We decided to greet the new McDonald's with Oregon grown potatoes made into french fries, grown and processed in Boardman, Oregon. Today there are over 4,500 McDonald's stores in China, so having the potato be our state vegetable would be a big help in marketing the potato to the world. Just two weeks ago we, the Oregon Potato Commission, were in Japan to say thank you for buying Oregon chipping potatoes. Calbee Chipping Company had totes of Klamath chipping potatoes on their floor ready to make potato chips. They are the biggest potato chipping company in Japan. We are still working to get Japan to open up fresh potato access to their country, this could be a 100–150-million-dollar market for Oregon and U.S. potatoes. Our biggest challenge is getting the Ministry of Japan to do a pest-risk analysis for potatoes. Being in Washington D.C. prior to our trip we had contact with approximately 150 senators and congress members to get this moving.

About three months ago, the Oregon Potato Commission helped support a trade team of potato buyers from Mexico. We took them to Strebin Farms in Umatilla, Oregon to see field harvesting, potatoes going into state-of-the-art storage, as well as washing, grading, inspections, and packaging. This was being done for one of Strebin's customers, so very special for them to see the product that they will be getting.

With all this international and domestic interest in Oregon potatoes, I fully believe in having the state vegetable of Oregon be the potato.

Thank you,
Daniel Chin