

SUBCOMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

Item 34: Department of Agriculture Japanese Beetle

To: Ways and Means Full Committee
From: Natural Resources Subcommittee
Carrier: Representative Levy

The Natural Resources Subcommittee heard a request from the Department of Agriculture on the Japanese beetle.

The Japanese beetle is an invasive pest that is known to cause plant and crop damage; it was first found in areas of Washington County in 2016. An eradication program was established in 2017 at the Department of Agriculture that has been routinely funded through one-time resources of either General Fund or Lottery Funds, depending on available revenues, and to varying degrees depending on program needs.

The Department of Agriculture did not include a budgetary request for the 2025-27 biennium to continue the Japanese beetle eradication program beyond the 2025 season, and no additional state resources were allocated during the 2025 legislative session. With the agency's discontinuation of the program after the 2025 treatment season, it is anticipated that Oregon has lost its Category 1 status set by the National Plant Board for the 2026 calendar year, which will result in quarantine requirements, treatment requirements, and potential loss of market access for the nursery industry. To combat these challenges that industry will face, the agency proposes creating a reshaped program that will focus on

market access for the industry, rather than eradication, funded by an increase to nursery fees.

The Natural Resources Subcommittee recommends that the Joint Interim Committee on Ways and Means recommend including an increase of \$372,490 in Other Funds expenditure limitation and authorizing the establishment of two permanent full-time positions (1.26 FTE) for the Department of Agriculture in a budget reconciliation bill during the 2026 legislative session for a Japanese beetle program.