

Submitter: Desiree Santos  
On Behalf Of:  
Committee: Senate Committee On Natural Resources and  
Wildfire  
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB887

Dear Chair Golden, Vice- Chair Nash and Members of the Committee:

My name is Desiree Santos, Resident Herbalist at Gig Harbor Apothecary. I am writing in support of SB 887 to create an Organic Policy Specialist position at the Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA).

In 2022, the legislature declared organic one of five “emerging sectors” in Oregon and appropriated funds for economic assessments of each sector. The assessment laid out several opportunities to build economic, agricultural, environmental, and community resilience through the organic sector. Oregon must continue to prioritize support for organic agriculture and there is a growing need for a policy specialist who understands the principles and practices of organic farming, production and market creation.

This position would lead the facilitation, marketing, and trade of organic products, and ensure inner- & inter-agency integration of policies supporting organic practices.

As an Herbalist that would like to continue to source herbs grown in the US, organic certification is vital to herbalism. Treating a person's health with herbs grown with pesticides is counterproductive as studies have shown the negative impact to a person's health from pesticides. By having an Organic Policy Specialist at ODA, it ensures that we can continue to buy herbs grown in the US.

As trade uncertainties and extreme weather events disrupt Oregon's food and agricultural systems, organic practices offer solutions that support agricultural and economic resilience and offer new market opportunities. Having an Organic Policy Specialist at ODA offers long-term support for an agricultural sector that offers many benefits to Oregon and its residents.

Investments in organic farming education, advocacy and programmatic needs are necessary to promote the growth of our agricultural industry. Please support SB 887.

Sincerely,  
Desiree Santos  
Gig Harbor Apothecary