

WILLAMETTE VALLEY

VINEYARDS

April 4, 2013

TO: SENATE COMMITTEE ON RURAL COMMUNITIES AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

FROM: WILLAMETTE VALLEY VINEYARDS

RE: STATEMENT IN SUPPORT OF SB 816

Willamette Valley Vineyards urges the Legislature to support SB 816 which establishes the Agricultural Experiment Station Fermentation Sciences and Value Added Program.

The value of many of Oregon's agricultural commodities can be increased through fermentation processes (e.g. grapes to wine, milk to artisan cheese, barley and hops to microbrews, wheat to bread etc.), distillation, and valued-added market analysis and marketing which will facilitate additional jobs and value for Oregon's economy.

SB 816 establishes the Agricultural Experiment Station (AES) Fermentation Sciences and Value Added Program to provide technical and marketing support to these rapidly growing industries. Investments in the program would be coordinated by Oregon State University (OSU) in collaboration with Umpqua, Chemeketa and other community colleges and high schools and will support Oregon's rapidly growing, value added, locally owned wine, cheese, microbrews, distilled spirits, and artisan bread industries. The bill would appropriate from Innovation Funds \$2.5 million for funding the establishment of the program.

OSU currently has the most comprehensive fermentation sciences program (e.g. wine, cheese, microbrews, and bread, with the potential for distilled spirits) of any university in the U.S. In most cases, OSU has the essential core fermentation faculty/scientists in place. A long-time supporter of the fermentation sciences program, Willamette Valley Vineyards (WVV) has utilized a yeast in its wine production that was initially developed at OSU for crafting cheese. WVV has also benefited from the employment of some of the students trained in the fermentation sciences program.

Establishing the Agricultural Experiment Station Fermentation Sciences and Value Added Program will add technical and research support as well as distillation and valued-added market analysis marketing components.

KEY INVESTMENT OUTCOMES:

- Support state agriculture and manufacturing, help industries meet the growing demand for Oregon products and compete more effectively in national and international markets.
- Provide Oregon specific research on emerging market trends and NW climate growing conditions.
- Improve the **Oregon Brand** and maintain our reputation for high quality and competitively priced products.
- Train the most highly skilled workforce in the country to feed Oregon's high growth industries.
- Support economic development; create jobs and new business opportunities across Oregon.

Every \$1 spent in agricultural research leads to \$10 in economic benefit. To help build on Oregon's premium craft industry, the state should invest in research, market development and workforce development in the fermentation industries. Willamette Valley Vineyards believes that investing \$2.5 million from the Innovation funds in the Fermentation Sciences and Value Added Program will help produce real and sustained job growth in Oregon.

Please support the passage of SB 816 and support the expansion of jobs in Oregon.

