



**Center for Small Farms &
Community Food Systems**

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Testimony to the Joint Committee on Ways and Means Subcommittee on Natural Resources:

On behalf of the OSU Center for Small Farms & Community Food Systems, I am pleased to submit this testimony in support of the Oregon Department of Agriculture's budget request to rebuild their Agriculture Marketing and Development Program (ADMP).

We are an Extension-based Center housed in the OSU College of Agricultural Sciences. Our Center's mission is to advance sustainable agriculture, community food systems, and economic progress for Oregon's small and mid-scale farmers and ranchers. The Center houses the OSU Extension Small Farms Program, which for two decades has supported the development and viability of small-scale, organic and sustainable farming and the local and regional food systems in which they are nested.

We have worked with farmers, ranchers, farmers market managers, farm support organizations, and other local food system stakeholders all over Oregon for more than two decades. We have seen first-hand how important it is to have a state agriculture department that understands these producers, their production and marketing systems, and the value of local and regional markets.

We have had long-term, productive relationships with individual ODA staff, in multiple programs, for many years, but they have long had limited capacity to do this work.

Therefore, we are very excited that ODA is focusing attention on:

- Local producers aiming to enter local food service and retail, such as direct to consumer, farmers markets, and farm to school procurement.
- Small and mid-scale producers selling into local markets and interested in growing into larger regional supply chains.
- Local and regional "food hubs" that provide aggregation, distribution, and technical support services that connect these producers to markets.
- Local food businesses that may wish to expand to national markets and need technical support with transportation, logistics, and market access.

In addition, we have seen how crucial it is that ODA recognize and develop relationships with underserved producers, particularly those who are Black, Indigenous, Latinx, or

other People of Color. This is true for all state agencies – including OSU as the state’s land grant institution – and we have been actively building these relationships with these producers in recent years, with positive outcomes. We look forward to working with ODA’s ADMP staff as we all improve the inclusivity of our programs and technical assistance.

For all of these reasons, we urge you to support Packages 090, Package 130, Package 430, and the Governor’s Recommended Budget for ADMP.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Lauren Gwin". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Lauren Gwin, Ph.D.
Associate Director