

Submitter: Kayla Warner

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Natural Resources

Measure: SB507

Economic vitality is crucial for communities to thrive. As a former Oregon State University Extension employee and board member of a local nonprofit food system NGO, I am in favor of supporting SB 507. I have worked with the Oregon Community Food System Network, alongside low-income populations and individuals on the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, local small farmers and community stakeholders from hospital administration to Executive Directors of community-based non-profits. In doing so, I have heard countless stories of the importance of small farms and local food in our communities, and with that, local food drives economic vitality as well as community health and well-being.

Supporting SB 507 means expanding the opportunities for individuals in the community to access local value-added foods throughout the entire year. As a former board member of the North Coast Food Web, I worked to support the expansion of the North Coast Online Farmers Market to ensure local small farmers have a place to sell value-added products to people all over the Oregon North coast region. In doing so, this allowed farmers to improve their economic vitality, engaging in more opportunities to sell and expand their value-added products to direct consumers. Furthermore, by supporting SB 507, we are keeping more dollars in our community and expanding access to local food. As a rural city in Oregon, located 2 hours from Portland, local food access is crucial to our community. Lastly, supporting SB 507 means reducing our carbon footprint. By supporting SB 507, our local farmers can expand their value-added goods, which, in time, will allow more people to buy food locally rather than outsource from out of town, thus reducing the carbon footprint through transportation of goods.

I am asking my elected officials to support SB 507 to overall improve small farm's economic vitality by to open up opportunities for small farms to differentiate themselves at the market, reduce waste, and create shelf-stable products they could use to stretch their income year round when the weather doesn't cooperate. Not only will this support small farmers, but also individual well being, and not only here in Clatsop County Oregon, but also in all areas of Oregon and for all farmers and small communities across the state.

Thank you.