

Submitter: Eliza Mason

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Natural Resources

Measure: SB507

Chair Golden, Vice-Chair Girod, and members of the committee — my name is Eliza Mason and I'm writing as a small organic fruit and vegetable farmer in Monroe.

I'm writing today in support of SB 507, which will provide much needed improvements and upgrades to Oregon's Farm Direct Marketing Law first enacted in 2011.

SB 507, with the forthcoming amendment, will: 1) Include entities that assist small producers by aggregating, delivering, and assisting with the sale of FDML eligible products, into the FDML regulatory framework. 2) Add steam canning and freeze drying to eligible processes that can be used for the production of preserves, jams, and canned fruit and vegetables. 3) Improve consumer access to FDML products by allowing additional sales opportunities through consignment. And 4) Include certain herbal tea blends, juices, and maple syrup as eligible products under OR's FDML.

I am excited to see the changes proposed in SB 507. With these changes, I'll be able to create additional value-added products that come from our farm and sell other locally-produced goods. This will allow me to make more income from our crops, reduce waste from spoilage, and offer new products that are in demand by our customers. These changes will directly and significantly help the small farmers who are the backbone of food-security in local communities.

Our local food systems have increased demands that we must start to address — SB 507 will help Oregon farmers and producers continue to sell safe, fresh produce directly to their consumers in the modern era.

With opportunities to increase revenue through additional safe, value-added products like jam and tea, and the opportunity to expand marketing and delivery avenues, SB 507 will help both Oregon's small producers and the customers they serve.

Oregonians are demanding more local, sustainable and fresh products accessible in their communities. With the boom in farmers markets over the last decade, and the expansion of food hubs and food delivery systems, it's time to ensure Oregon's Farm Direct Marketing Law keeps pace.

The improvements in the legislation before you will help improve upon our robust local food system, expand producers' sales and income opportunities, and give everyone a clearer regulatory framework about what foods can and cannot be sold farm-direct.

Countless farmers and consumers benefit from this model and we support the continuation and modernization of this important process.

I urge your support for SB 507.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Eliza Mason