



## **Testimony In Opposition to SB 85**

Submitted to the Senate Natural Resources Committee March 6, 2023

by Dave Dillon, president of Food Northwest

Food Northwest is the non-profit trade association representing food companies in Oregon, Washington, and Idaho. The food sector is Oregon's second largest manufacturing employer, ranking just behind semiconductors, with 35,000 employees working for over 3,400 companies across all 36 Oregon counties. 49,000 Oregon jobs depend directly on food making and each of these jobs represents another 1.48 Oregon jobs which depend on the food sector. Food companies in Oregon have higher wage rate than the sector nationwide, which translates to a critical state and local tax base. Much of this success is made possible by our family farmers and ranchers.

We share the values of many Oregonians. We want a clean environment, quality jobs for our communities, and a predictable business environment. We have heard time and time again that Oregon's Confined Animal Feeding Operations (CAFO) regulations protect both animal welfare and the environment. These regulations have created a stable business environment for business, employees, and communities. And with that the food and ag sector have shared incredible successes creating name brand products that are shipped for consumers to enjoy globally.

But without a healthy ag sector, the food making sector cannot continue to thrive as a pillar of healthy Oregon communities. SB 85 and similar legislative proposal would undermine agriculture in Oregon and threaten the viability of the food sector. The ultimate result would be fewer local food sources, higher food costs, increased carbon footprint of our food supply, and less consumer choice. All of this at a time that Oregonians are feeling the ongoing effects of inflation.

SB 85 (-1 amendment) and similar legislation will take production out of our local farms and ranches and instead, require Oregonians to rely on food production from other states or countries. This proposal fails to recognize values of our family farms and ranches and ignores the extraordinarily high standards our existing laws set to ensure our environment is protected. If we do not have agricultural products, we cannot have a viable food making sector.

Please oppose SB 85 (-1).