

Submitter: Katie Walchli
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Rules
Measure: SCR3

Good morning,

I am writing to support SCR 3, which would designate the potato as the official vegetable of Oregon.

I am a potato grower in Eastern Oregon and 3rd generation farmer. Our family farm has been a huge part of shaping who I am as a person today. The potato industry however, is what brought me back into agriculture after struggling to find my place/purpose in life during college. I had become a single mom and had no idea where life was taking me, so my dad brought me on a trip to Washington DC with the Oregon potato commission, which I now proudly hold a seat on. I rediscovered my passion I've had since I was little girl. I was able to speak and address the issue of fresh white potatoes not being available for purchase through some of the government food programs, like WIC. I was given an opportunity to be a voice and advocate for so many women like myself. Potatoes have always been a staple in my pantry, because of their nutrition value, shelf life, and affordability. I was a single mom for 8 years and things would get tight occasionally. Potatoes were just something that always went the extra mile in our household. Homemade potato soup and mashed potatoes are just two things I could make and have last for a week at a time with minimal effort and cost. Mashed potatoes also happened to be my daughter's favorite food at the time. My daughter even to this day is a very picky eater and vegetables are hard to fit into her diet, so thank goodness she doesn't turn up her nose at potatoes. All my kids love them and it's one of the things they ask for constantly. My 5 year old asks for eggs and potatoes for breakfast regularly. We are big on nutrition and really take notice on not only what we eat but what our kids eat as well. Meal prep has been a game changer in our family especially with 5 kids and an extremely busy schedule. Potatoes are included in at least one meal everyday and that could be breakfast, lunch, or dinner.

All in all you can say potatoes have really made an impact in my life in a lot of different ways. It may sound crazy that a vegetable has had such an impact on my life but it's the truth. I rediscovered my passion for agriculture and a new passion for being an advocate for the industry. It brought me closer to my dad and potatoes gave the two of us something to really bond over before his passing. Lastly it's brought lots of smiles to our table.

Thank you for your time,

Katie Walchli
Walchli Farms and Oregon Potato Commissioner