



Dear Chair Lieber and Members of the Committee:

As climate change disrupts our food and agriculture systems, organic practices offer solutions that mitigate adverse impacts, support adaptation towards agricultural and economic resilience, and offer new market opportunities for our state.

The recent organic market assessment confirmed that the organic industry in Oregon brings hundreds of millions of dollars to the state alongside thousands of jobs and a key natural solution to the climate crisis. Organic farmers test new practices and actively work on the frontline to identify practices that are focused on resilient agriculture that is not only healthier for people and communities, but that is playing a key role in restoring our soil and rebalancing the climate.

As farmers experience cost increases across their supply chain, creating a state match to the USDA cost share reimbursement, and supporting the transition to organic will help more Oregon producers choose organic certification and help scale the agricultural practices that are proven to provide solutions to some of the biggest challenges in the state.

Organic certification is a key driver for hundreds of thousands of Oregonians who want to provide nutritious, locally-grown foods for their families. New Seasons serves customers throughout the Portland-metro region with these high-quality, organic products because it is the trusted mark of organic certification that creates trust that their dollars are supporting the health of their communities and the planet.

Oregon is ideally situated to be a leader in the rapidly growing organic industry, which surpassed \$60 billion in 2022, but will need to make both public and private investments in order to fully actualize this opportunity. Oregon is losing ground compared to other organic market-leading states across the country.

Organic farmers are subject to third party verification, rigorous certification processes, and federal standards that mandate practices which, among other benefits, creates the healthy soils found on organic farms. Certification takes three years and is a considerable economic burden on organic farmers that conventional farmers are not subject to.

Organic producers often find themselves on the frontline, trying out new practices and learning through trial and error in pursuit of sustainability innovations—all within strict regulatory confines, and with little federal and state support.

Given the triple bottom line benefits organic can bring Oregon, investments in organic farming and transitioning to organic are smart policy moves. Please support SB 1058 -2.

Sincerely,

Athena Petty
Senior Manager, Sustainability
New Seasons Market