

SB 208 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Senate Committee On Natural Resources and Wildfire

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Sub-Referral To: Joint Committee On Ways and Means

Meeting Dates: 2/20, 3/4

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

The measure directs the Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA), in partnership with Oregon State University, to study the potential for developing commercial seaweed production to produce feed for livestock to reduce methane emissions. It appropriates \$250,000 of General Fund moneys to Oregon State University for research purposes. ODA is required to present the study to an appropriate committee of the Legislative Assembly by September 15, 2027. Declares emergency, effective upon passage.

Fiscal impact: May have fiscal impact, but no statement yet issued.

Revenue impact: May have revenue impact, but no statement yet issued.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- \$1 million dollar USDA grant to OSU
- Australian seaweed benefits
- Oregon seaweed benefits

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

According to the University of California, Davis's College of Agriculture and Environmental Science, methane is a potent greenhouse gas with a warming potential of more than 28 times that of carbon dioxide. Cattle and livestock contribute to methane emissions regularly through digestion, fertilizer manufacturing, feed production, land-use changes (e.g., converting forests to pastures to grazing land), energy use for farm inputs, and during slaughter and processing. Some estimates of the percentage of global greenhouse gas emissions attributable to livestock range from 11.1 to 19.6 percent.

University of California, Davis researchers have also researched a potential method for reducing methane emissions from livestock, studying red seaweeds called *asparagopsis armata* and *asparagopsis taxiformis* fed to cattle, which have been shown to reduce methane emissions over 20 percent in cows and beef cattle that were fed the algae as part of their diets.