

Submitter: Katie Swanson
On Behalf Of: Sweet Union Farm
Committee: House Committee On Agriculture, Land Use, Natural
Resources, and Water
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2979

Dear Co-Chair Helm, Co-Chair Owens, and members of the House Committee on Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Wildfire:

My name is Katie Swanson, owner of Sweet Union Farm in Klamath Falls. We grow mixed vegetables on small acreage which we sell directly to our community via the farmers market, restaurants, schools, the hospital and our local food hub.

As you know, Klamath Falls faces many challenges including drought, extreme heat and wildfire. It is incredibly difficult to grow food in this region and we are relied on as one of the few farms that sells food at any scale directly to our community. Every year gets more and more difficult (and expensive) to continue our important work.

We have benefitted from the Oregon's Farmer/Rancher Disaster Resilience Grants a ton. They made disaster relief funding accessible to our farm and we were able to purchase equipment to ventilate our tunnels and manage cover crop - both of which are key to making it through these extreme weather events. We never could have afforded these capital investments otherwise. We deserve access to the same amount of funding larger producers access and these grant programs made that happen. These grants are a great alternative to traditional disaster relief funding – they have given farmers the resources to maintain their crops through extreme weather events, rather than being compensated after they lose them.

Please support HB 2979 to renew funding for this valuable program.

Thank you,

Katie Swanson
Sweet Union Farm
Klamath Falls