

Submitter: Megan Person

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2979

Dear Members of the House Committee on Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water,

I am a longtime employee of a small scale vegetable farm selling at several farmers markets in Portland and Hillsboro, as well as directly to customers. I'm writing to strongly support continued funding for farmer's markets through HB 2979.

I began working in small scale vegetable farming during COVID-19. Health, safety and reliable food access amid supply chain shortages were foremost on the minds of customers who began seeking an alternative route to the grocery stores. Small farms continue to be a necessary link in the food system.

Some perspective that my unique position in small scale farming allows me to share: it takes a crew of roughly 10 people to grow enough food for 500 weekly share members during the peak season. This is not counting hundreds of people who shop from us at the farmer's market. This same small crew feeds 250 members during the winter farming season. We continue to face uncertainty about import/export feasibility due to myriad issues like outbreaks of food borne illness in industrial-scale farm operations, shortage of migrant labor under the current administration, and the growing cost and carbon footprint of interstate transportation. Fortunately, a flourishing small scale farm economy is growing right here along the edges of the city. Please continue to support local programs to subsidize accessibility of local food, keep our money circulating in our local economy and offset the competitive edge of federal farm subsidies generally only afforded to industrial-scale farm operations. These small crews of mighty food workers are looking to a future of potential disruption and anticipating the growing needs of our people and our planet.

Thank you for your work and your organizing around this matter!

Sincerely,

Megan Person  
Milwaukie, OR