

Submitter: Jennifer Rippey
On Behalf Of: Mount Hood Farmers Market
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 Jennifer Rippey, and I am a Farmers Market Manager from Mount Hood Farmers Market in Sandy. I am writing to strongly support HB 2979 and urge continued investment in Oregon's farmers markets, which serve as critical infrastructure for local economies, small farms, and food access programs. Farmers markets are experiencing extreme weather. Heat waves, wildfires, droughts, and storms disrupt operations and threaten vendors. We need this funding to respond to these challenges and ensure markets remain open, accessible, and sustainable.

The Farmers Market Climate Resilience Grant Fund, FMF Growth Grant, and SNAP support grants have been lifelines, helping markets upgrade infrastructure, implement cooling and smoke mitigation strategies, and expand SNAP/Double Up Food Bucks programs. But demand far exceeds available funding—grant requests would have required more than double the resources OFMA has to distribute. Without renewed investment, farmers markets will struggle to continue serving their communities.

These programs impact me personally because:

- Mount Hood Farmers Market has received both an FMF Growth Grant and a Climate Resilience Grant, which have been essential in keeping our market sustainable and accessible.
- The Climate Resilience Grant has helped and continues to help us address the challenges of extreme weather, including wildfires, droughts, storms, and extreme heat, ensuring we can stay open despite these disruptions. This funding is crucial to maintaining safe and welcoming market conditions for vendors and shoppers.
- SNAP and Double Up Food Bucks are vital to our community, making fresh, local food accessible to families who need it most. Without this funding, many families would struggle to afford healthy, local produce.
- Wildfires, extreme heat, droughts, and storms have all affected our market operations, creating challenges for vendors and shoppers. Funding for mitigation strategies is critical to keeping our market open and safe.

OFMA and FMF can leverage state funds to match federal funding, strengthening our farmers markets and local food systems. We cannot afford to fall behind. Please support HB 2979 to keep our markets strong, our farmers supported, and our communities fed.

Thank you,
Jennifer Rippey

Mount Hood Farmers Market
39140 Proctor Blvd
Sandy, OR 97055