

House Committee on Revenue  
HB 2097  
Testimony in Support

Chair Nathanson, members of the committee,

My name is Helle Ruddenklau and my husband, Bruce, and I farm in Yamhill and Polk counties, and I support HB 2097.

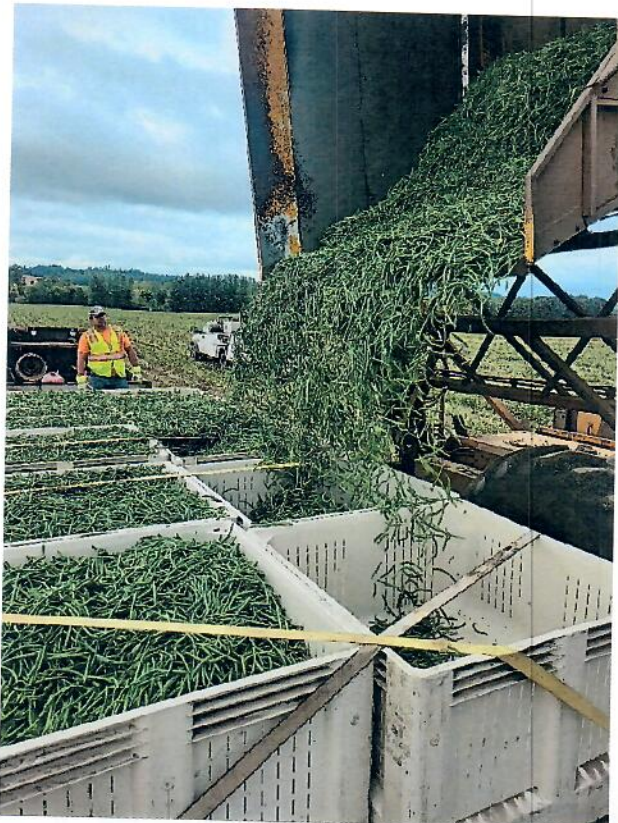
We have a diverse cropping farm with 7 – 10 different crops every year. Included in that mix is generally green beans and sometimes sweet corn grown under contract with National Frozen Foods out of Albany.

Normally we would raise the crop and then National Frozen Foods comes and harvests it and transport it to one of their processing plants. However, I heard about Farmers Ending Hunger, and their effort to facilitate food donations directly from farmers to those most in need, and we have now been participating for a number of years.

It's not actually that straight forward for us to donate fresh produce, as you can see from the pictures that are included at the end. We have to drive a pickup and trailer into Salem and/or McMinnville to pick up empty totes. The company helps us get those totes loaded, and I deliver the full totes back. In this case I brought two totes to Yamhill County Action Partnership (YCAP) in McMinnville, then six totes to Marion-Polk Food Share in Salem, and the last two totes to Hope Station in Salem. The value of the 5,123 lbs donation was \$666.17. The current tax credit at 15% is right around \$100. That is our compensation for 5,123 lbs of fresh green beans, at least 10 hours of my time and 150 miles of driving with the pickup and trailer.

We are obviously not doing it for the money! We believe in this program and want to participate. We donate prime crop that otherwise would have gone for processing. As a mom, I want to donate fresh produce. I know my kids prefer it and I want the experience of eating prime, fresh green beans or sweet corn available to all kids in this state.

Oregon a state of agricultural abundance, and knowing kids experience hunger breaks my heart. I hope you will extend the program and maybe even increase the tax credit to 25% to encourage other farmers to participate. I know it is a good deal for Oregon and I know it is good for the kids.







Picked up totes on August 29<sup>th</sup> (Thursday before Labor Day) (~3 hours)

Beans picked and loaded into totes late afternoon on Labor Day, Sept 2<sup>nd</sup> (~3 hours)

Delivered morning of September 3<sup>rd</sup> (~4 hours)

Two totes to YCAP in McMinnville (966 lbs), 6 totes to Marion-Polk Food Share in Salem (3,118 lbs), 2 totes to Hope's Station in Salem (1,039 lbs).

5,123 lbs delivered @ \$260.07/T = \$666.17 value of donation.

**Tax Credit** is 15% so:  $0.15 \times \$666.17 = \$99.93$ , so about **\$100**

**10 hrs of my time (plus crew for loading) and 150 miles for the pickup and trailer.**