



AN EMPLOYEE OWNED PURPOSE TRUST

2-26-2025

To: Ways and Means Subcommittee on Natural Resources

From: Stacy Kraker, CEO, Hummingbird Wholesale

RE: H.B. 5039, Support for the Oregon Agricultural Heritage Program and OWEB 2025-2027 Budget

Co-Chair Frederick, Co-Chair Levy, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board's (OWEB) 2025-2027 budget, especially the inclusion of funding for the Oregon Agricultural Heritage Program (OAHP).

I write to you today to share my strong support for \$17.3 million in funding OAHP in the 2025 Oregon Legislative Session. OAHP helps Oregon leverage a remarkable 2:1 federal match through programs including the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and protects working ranch and farmlands for their agriculture and natural resource values.

Hummingbird Wholesale is an organic food manufacturer and wholesale distributor based in Eugene. We specialize in working directly with Oregon and Pacific Northwest farmers to contract for their crops and bringing those products to market. Our business and the food retailers, food manufacturers, restaurants and consumers we serve rely on farmers and the land they steward for our livelihoods. In reality, preserving agricultural land for agricultural use is essential not only for the success of farmers, but for all Oregonians – for our health (everyone eats) and for our economy, particularly rural economies. But Oregon farmland is threatened by development and the cost of succession for farmers.

Oregon farmland is threatened by fragmentation and development. From 2017-2022, Oregon lost 660,000 acres, or 4%, of its ag land from production (USDA Census of Agriculture). OAHP stems this tide across the state, with approved projects from Columbia to Lake Counties. OAHP works with farmers on a voluntary basis to maintain and improve farm production while preserving ag land and conserving natural habitat. The program also allows farmers to realize some of the equity in their land without selling part of the farm or selling to developers, thereby making maintaining their land viable for the long-haul. OAHP provides a pathway to technical assistance to help farmers adapt to climate change and adopt climate-friendly practices. Ultimately, these programs help farmers find the next generation to take over the land and keep it in production.

HB 5039 and funding for the Oregon Agricultural Heritage Program (OAHP) has broad support across the industry and bipartisan support in the legislature - a no brainer! That is why I am urging you to support HB 5039 and \$17.3 million in funding OAHP in the 2025 Oregon Legislative Session.

Thank you,

Stacy Kraker
CEO
Hummingbird Wholesale