

Dear Chair Golden, Vice- Chair Nash and Members of the Committee:

My name is Rachael Gorjestani, the owner of a food business based in San Francisco who gets many of our pantry and wholesale items through a number of Oregon based businesses.

I am writing in support of SB 887 to create an Organic Policy Specialist position at the Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA).

In 2022, the legislature declared organic one of five “emerging sectors” in Oregon and appropriated funds for economic assessments of each sector. The assessment laid out several opportunities to build economic, agricultural, environmental, and community resilience through the organic sector. Oregon must continue to prioritize support for organic agriculture and there is a growing need for a policy specialist who understands the principles and practices of organic farming, production and market creation.

Our organization would greatly benefit from an Organic Policy Specialist at ODA because my company only purchases organic ingredients. Specifically for our own business, we currently purchase ingredients with a few Oregon based businesses and would like to see them flourish and grow.

And yet there are many other reasons why we support this — it’s good for the economy, it’s good for the people of Oregon, it’s good for the environment, and it ensures a future in the ever-threatening dangers of climate change.

- Organic producers often find themselves on the frontline, trying out new practices and learning through trial and error in pursuit of sustainability innovations—all within strict regulatory confines, and with nominal federal and state support.
- Investments in organic farming education, advocacy and programmatic needs are necessary to promote the growth of our agricultural industry. Please support SB 887.
- Over 90% of Oregon households are buying Organic foods (from the [Organic Trade Association](#)).
- Ranking 12th in the nation, Oregon has 750 organic businesses and 30% of Oregon organic farms plan on increasing production over the next 5 years (from the Organic Trade Association).

Sincere,

Rachael Gorjestani

Business owner who purchases Oregon organic products