

Submitter: Adam Sunshine
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Natural Resources and
Wildfire
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB887

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

My name is Adam Sunshine, and I am a farmworker and farmers market manager in Portland, Oregon. I strongly support SB 887 to create an Organic Policy Specialist position at the Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA).

Oregon has long been a leader in sustainable agriculture, but organic producers face significant challenges. In 2022, the legislature recognized organic as an emerging sector and funded an economic assessment, which highlighted opportunities to strengthen the industry. A dedicated Organic Policy Specialist would facilitate market growth, coordinate policies, and ensure interagency collaboration to support organic farmers and businesses.

As trade uncertainties and extreme weather disrupt our food systems, organic practices offer resilience, economic opportunity, and critical benefits for public and environmental health. Organic farming improves soil health, reduces water contamination, and promotes biodiversity, leading to cleaner air, water, and food. Consumers increasingly seek organic options because they reduce exposure to synthetic pesticides and chemicals, benefiting overall community well-being.

Other states like Washington and Pennsylvania have invested in organic agriculture, and Oregon risks falling behind. Over 90% of Oregon households buy organic food, and with 750 organic businesses—30% of which plan to expand—this sector presents a major economic and environmental opportunity.

I urge you to support SB 887 to ensure Oregon remains at the forefront of organic agriculture while fostering healthier communities and ecosystems. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Adam Sunshine