



Locally Grown
and
GROWING STRONG

Co-Chairs Helm and Owens, Vice-Chair Finger-McDonald, and members of the committee:

Oregon Farm Bureau (OFB) is the state's most inclusive agriculture organization, proudly representing more than 6,500 family farms and ranches that produce more than 220 agricultural commodities. From hops and hazelnuts to cattle, cranberries, and timber with operations spanning from just a few acres to thousands, our members utilize all farming methods including organic, conventional, regenerative, biotech, and even no-tech.

We appreciate the opportunity to submit testimony in support of House Bill 3487, which grants counties the flexibility to utilize existing appropriations for administering grasshopper suppression efforts. Grasshoppers pose a severe threat to Oregon's agricultural industry, capable of devastating rangelands, hayfields, and other vital crops. Left unchecked, infestations may lead to significant economic losses for producers and widespread damage to ecosystems.

HB 3487 ensures counties have the ability to allocate existing funds toward suppression programs, enabling swift, proactive, and cost-effective responses. Given the cyclical nature of grasshopper outbreaks, maintaining consistent and adaptable funding is essential. Allowing counties to direct resources as needed will help prevent more severe infestations that could otherwise require costly, large-scale interventions.

Investing in pest management is critical to mitigating future losses. In 2023 alone, grasshoppers caused at least \$18 million in alfalfa production losses across Oregon. Thanks to federal and state support, \$243,000 in pest control funding helped protect more than 116,500 acres in Malheur and Klamath counties from severe damage. However, the challenge persists—by 2024, over 10.8 million acres in Oregon were identified as high-risk. Without action, grasshopper infestations on public lands can spread to private property, further threatening agricultural and rural economies.

Proactive pest control efforts not only protect crops and rangelands but also prevents soil erosion, preserves water filtration, and sustains ecosystems vital to Oregon's farmers and ranchers. We support the principles of integrated pest management, which balance environmental and economic considerations in pest control strategies.

Oregon Farm Bureau urges the legislature to equip counties with the necessary tools to protect Oregon's agricultural industry from destructive pest outbreaks and support HB 3487.

Thank you.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "LK", is positioned above the name Lauren Kuenzi.

Lauren Kuenzi

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