

Submitter: lale kaya
On Behalf Of: suncatcher food forest
Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means Subcommittee On
Natural Resources
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB5502

Joint Committee On Ways and Means Subcommittee On Natural Resources

Oregon State Capitol

900 Court Street NE

Salem, Oregon 97301

24 March 2025

Co-Chairs Senator Frederick and Representative Levy and members of the
Committee

I am writing on behalf of suncatcher food forest in support of the Farm to School
Equipment and Infrastructure Grant Program in the Oregon Department of
Agriculture's budget. This Grant program provides funding for food producers to
access necessary equipment to meet the demands of the school marketplace.

We grow vegetables and fruit. We received this grant funding in 2024 and 2022. This
allowed us to sell to schools and food banks. This increased our income. It also
helped us sell bulk crops with a guarantee sales, instead of having to haul it to a
farmers market without any guarantee of selling it all during warm summer months. It
was nice not having to watch our produce wilt at a farmers market.

We support this grant program because

It addresses a significant barrier for small and mid-sized producers selling to schools.

This program is unique and valuable to food producers who aspire to enter the school

food market.

In Oregon, there is a significant need for food producers to be equipped to meet the growing demand from schools for local products.

I ask that you support this grant program in the Oregon Department of Agriculture's budget at \$1 million. Thank you for your time.

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azalea, oregon