

Submitter: Beau Caceu
On Behalf Of: La Creole Orchards
Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB5006

Esteemed Members of the Joint Committee on Ways and Means:

I urge you to renew the state's investment in climate-resilient agriculture by funding HB2979, the Food Systems Resilience bill. HB 2979 provides funding for Oregon's Farmer and Rancher Disaster Resilience Grants as well as similar funding for Food Hubs and Farmers Markets.

The Farmer & Rancher Disaster Resilience Grants are supporting Oregon's small and underserved producers to be more resilient to fire and extreme weather events – funding things like trailers for evacuation, shade cloth, irrigation efficiency, and water storage. This funding is a great alternative to traditional disaster relief funding, as it has given farmers the resources to maintain their crops and livestock through disasters, rather than being compensated by the State after they lose them. This is a strategic and responsible use of state funding.

We applied for and obtained a Farmer & Rancher Disaster Resilience Grant that enabled us to triple our irrigation water storage from 35,000 gallons to over 100,000 gallons. This stored water is critical for our operations (because the two deep wells that we had drilled came up nearly empty, which was obviously a sunken cost). It could come in handy in an emergency (a fire for ex.), for us and our neighbors.

Thank you for your consideration.

Beau Caceu
La Creole Orchards