

Submitter: Ashley Rood  
On Behalf Of: Dry Farming Institute  
Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means  
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB5006  
Members of the Joint Committee on Ways and Means:

I am here to urge your support of HB 2979, which provides funding for Oregon's farmers, ranchers, food hubs, and farmers markets.

In my 20 years of working towards more local and sustainable food system across the west, this grant program has been the most successful in supporting farmers in becoming more resilient. The way the program has been so intentionally designed and implemented makes it simple and accessible. I've heard nothing but positive responses from farmers in Oregon.

The Dry Farming Institute is interested in meeting farmers where they are and supporting innovative and responsive efforts to support farmers. This program does just that. If you want to show your constituents that you support not just farmers and local food outlets but entire communities by fostering access to healthy, local food, creating hubs for community engagement and expanding nutrition incentive programs, support HB 2979. Supporting the Food Systems Resilience Programs in HB 2979 means investing in climate resilience, disaster preparedness, conservation and stewardship, rural economic development, and thriving small businesses all over our state.

HB 2979 passed unanimously out of the House Committee on Ag, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water with over 200 submissions of written testimony in support, including a letter signed by 248 farms, food hubs, farmers markets, community organizations and others.

Continuity of this funding is critical! When funding is available one year and not the next, interest in these programs decreases, and it becomes difficult for farmers and community organizations to anticipate what will be available and take best advantage of it.

I urge you to fund HB 2979. Thank you.