

Submitter: Parker Cooper

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means Subcommittee
On Education

Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB5525

Good afternoon and thank you for your time today.

My name is Parker Cooper, I am an OSU Fermentation Science graduate. I am here to ask for your continuing support to fund the OSU Fermentation Science program. The Food science program at OSU provides research, innovation, education, and is incredibly valuable to Oregon.

According to business Oregon, nearly 1,700 businesses create craft beer and wine, fine food, and world-renowned cheeses.

These industries directly employ nearly 49,000 workers across the state. Processes like fermentation increase the value of Oregon's raw agricultural commodities,

OSU's Fermentation Science Program does research and provides technical expertise to Oregon's food producers. One research project showed that additional washing of milk trucks did not have a deleterious effect on milk quality, meaning that producers can save time, chemicals, and labor by washing milk trucks as frequently as they need to.

With the implementation of the Food Safety Modernization Act, many producers have been overwhelmed with the requirements to provide scientific evidence that backs up their food food safety plan. OSU provides technical expertise that industry relies on.

OSU graduates are highly sought after and the Fermentation Science Program prepares students to enter the workforce and hit the ground running. In my current role as a food safety specialist, I run into classmates all the time who work in the food sector in oregon.

OSU supports students after graduation. I have reached out to OSU countless times over the years to troubleshoot issues or research technical solutions.

For example We had lost two vats of cheese due to an unknown microbial issue. I called Dr. Waite-Cusic at 7:30 am on a Monday morning and she answered the phone and walked me through how we would find the problem. Her lab tested samples, and detected the issue. We were able to isolate and fix the issue and resume production. I cannot convey how much the support of the OSU Fermentation Science Program is worth to Oregon's producers, both big and small. We all benefit from their work and their incredible, collaborative responsiveness.

OSU fermentation science program provides workforce development, technical assistance and research that industry relies on. I strongly implore you to continue funding this crucial program.

Thank you for the opportunity to tell you of my experiences with the Fermentation Science program.

Sincerely,
Parker Cooper