

HB 2038 Vote 'Yes' for Farm to School and School Gardens!



Rather than cutting farm to school and school garden funding, as proposed in the Governor's 2017 draft budget, **every effort should be made to increase support** for this important work.

Oregon is a leader.

Oregon's nationally-recognized Farm to School and School Garden program provides funding for school districts to buy and serve local foods, and for districts and partner organizations to educate children about food, gardens, and agriculture. These programs have many benefits, including:

- Create market opportunities for Oregon's farmers, fishers, ranchers and food processors
- Increase children's consumption of fruits and vegetables and shape life-long healthy eating habits
- Bridge urban-rural divides, and bring Oregon's coastline inland

53% of Oregon kids rely on schools for healthy meals.

For many of Oregon's most vulnerable children, school meals are the healthiest and most consistent meals in their day and week. Even when they do have money for food, low-income families often cannot afford vegetables, so introducing kids to new healthy vegetables through garden and cafeteria programs has a profound impact on their diets.

For every \$1 schools spend on local food, nearly \$2 are returned to the economy.

Schools that buy local have generated millions for Oregon's communities. With support from Oregon's Farm to School and School Garden grant program, schools can continue building relationships with producers all over the state, and bringing nutritious, local food to students.

From the Willamette Valley to Curry County, farms, schools and kids are benefiting from Farm to School and School Garden Grants.

Salem-Keizer plants the seeds of science

Through their school gardens, the Salem-Keizer Education Foundation has been able to bring students, families, and educators together. The gardens have become a center of STEM learning for students as well as community education through the Urban AgFest— a celebration that reaches more than 1,000 students and their families.

Bend-La Pine schools go “whole-hog”

Through the support of Oregon’s farm to school grant dollars, the Bend-La Pine school district was able to partner with the FFA to bring the experience of rearing, butchering, and preparing whole animals to students. Two of the individuals who have graduated from this program are now working at local butcheries.

A new market for Hermiston watermelons

Sam Pollock and Sons have found a customer-base for late-season watermelons that he might not otherwise sell. While

grocery store sales peter out at the end of summer, melon season goes through September, when schools are in session and looking for healthy fruits to bring to their cafeterias. Last year, the Pollocks sold \$3,842 worth of fruit to schools with active farm to school programs.

Port Orford fish lands in school cafeterias

When Port Orford Sustainable Seafood needed a customer for some surplus catch, they called Rogue Valley Farm to School. Within an hour of the request, and through the support of Oregon farm to school grant dollars, the organization was able to supply Oregon-caught seafood to schools in south-central Oregon.

Reviving agricultural education in Condon

Despite being an agricultural region, agricultural education in Condon has been a victim of budget cuts. When the East John Day Watershed Council received a grant to revive K-12 agricultural education, the kids and the whole community rejoiced, and pulled together for a greenhouse-raising. The Watershed Council is partnering with the school district and local farms, ranches, and businesses to educate kids and the community about local agriculture.

In the 2016-17 school year, more than 140 school districts serving 90% of Oregon school meals are including healthy, local food with help from Oregon’s Farm to School and School Garden grant program.

We could be doing so much more.

Imagine the benefits to our economy if more than a few cents per kid, per day was spent on local ingredients. Imagine if every school had a garden where kids could have a hands-on approach to STEM classes. Imagine if all kids grew up knowing where food comes from, and how to grow their own.

Every dime we spend on Farm to School and School Gardens makes a difference to Oregon kids who deserve a diet of healthy, local food, and to Oregon’s farmers, ranchers, fishers, and food processors who depend on stable customers.

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