



LEGISLATIVE GOAL

OEC supports legislative policies that will make Oregon a model for environmentally and socially responsible agricultural production that supports rural economies.

Farming and ranching are an integral part of the fabric of Oregon's communities, economy, and landscape. Farmers' and ranchers' improving management practices have a significant effect on the quality of Oregon's rivers, air, and fish and wildlife habitat. And, Oregon's farming community faces unprecedented economic challenges. Unless farming can become more financially viable, the preservation of Oregon's agricultural base into the next generation is at risk.

Our vision is that Oregon will support farmers' and ranchers' efforts to continually improve the management of their land, and support their access to increasing market and governmental financial incentives for good environmental stewardship in food production. These incentives provide a unique opportunity for Oregon to accomplish its multiple goals of economic vitality, strong communities, and environmental stewardship.

We support legislative policies that will allow our grandchildren to have clean water and healthy fisheries, AND fresh berries from the Willamette Valley, pears from Hood River, and beef and lamb from ranchers throughout the state.

LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

Supporting Healthy Watersheds and Thriving Rural Economies

Adequate Funding for Salmon Recovery and Healthy Watersheds

Ensure the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (OWEB) has the necessary capital and capacity funding to put strategic, effective watershed restoration and salmon recovery projects on the ground. The state's commitment to and success in locally-driven voluntary conservation around the state depends on the right balance of capacity and on-the-ground project funding.

Funding Local Planning and Technical Assistance

Watershed Councils and Soil and Water Conservation Districts provide a strategic framework for watershed restoration investments. They provide critical outreach and technical assistance to agricultural and forest landowners wishing to improve management practices, engage in restoration projects to benefit salmon, water quality, and watershed health, and monitor results. They also help landowners take advantage of the many governmental, private, and market incentives available to pay for improved practices and watershed restoration projects.

Currently these organizations do not have sufficient capacity to help landowners meet Oregon's environmental goals.

The following are necessary to support Salmon Recovery and Watershed Restoration in Oregon:

- OWEB Capacity (Non-Capital) Grants program at \$13.7 million
- ODA Soil and Water Conservation District Support at \$6 million
- OWEB Watershed Council Capacity Support at \$6 million
- OWEB Capital Grants Program at \$60 million
- Reverse the trend of using Measure 66 Capacity (Non-Capital) funds to backfill other state natural resource agency budgets by supporting key agency programs with stable General Fund dollars.

Oregon Sustainable Agriculture Resources Center

Consumers are increasingly choosing and willing to pay more for Oregon food products they believe are produced in a way that is healthier for them, the environment, and their community. These markets are growing beyond farmer's markets and upscale grocery stores to include food service companies, hospitals, and schools. The foreign markets for these products are also expanding exponentially.

LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES, CONTINUED

The Oregon Sustainable Agriculture Resources Center (OSARC) will provide a central information and connection resource to assist Oregon's farmers and food businesses who wish to benefit from these growing values-driven markets. The Oregon Department of Agriculture will provide critical technical assistance and policy coordination to assist farmers and food businesses in accessing these growing, high value markets.

OEC supports the Governor's budget recommendation for \$1.1 million for OSARC.

A Win-Win: A Cleaner Environment and Higher Farm Income

Biofuels Feedstock Research

Continued funding for research on the viability and compatibility of biofuel feedstocks with other crops will be critical to a science-based determination of policy in Oregon on locally-grown biofuels.

OEC supports the Governor's budget recommendation of \$470,000.

Local Farms and Nutrition Position

Half of all food consumers say they prefer to buy locally produced food, and are often willing to pay more for it. Schools, hospitals, and food service companies are increasingly demanding more fresh, nutritious food, particularly as the obesity epidemic grows. Yet there are bottlenecks for local distribution in the current food system. This position would work to increase the use of locally produced food from local farms while improving the health of Oregonians.

Provide \$178,333 in ODA's budget for the Local Farms and Nutrition Position.

Renewable Energy Position

The state has set renewable energy targets, and the Legislature is currently discussing renewable energy and fuel standards. This ODA staff person would assist the state in meeting these targets through renewable energy

generation on agricultural lands in Oregon. The staff person would assist landowners wishing to benefit from additional income streams provided by renewable energy generation on farm. The position would also represent the agricultural community in policy-making settings related to renewable energy.

Provide \$178,333 for a Renewable Energy Specialist at ODA.

Planning Now for Oregon's Future Land and Water Needs

Planning to Meet Oregon's Future Water Needs

Oregon's population is growing, and our current water supply is already oversubscribed. OEC supports the Oregon Water Resources Department's *Oregon Water Supply & Conservation Initiative* to assess Oregon's future water supply and demand and enable the state and local jurisdictions to plan for the future and to meet future water needs. Water conservation must be a key component of this effort.

OEC supports the Governor's budget recommendation of \$891,129 for this assessment.

Protecting Oregon's Agricultural Lands from Development

Oregon is renowned for the bounty of food and farm products it grows. Agriculture is a significant part of Oregon's diverse economy. A critical mass of productive agricultural lands are necessary to support the farming infrastructure of suppliers, processing, and distribution. Many farm operations are not compatible with subdivision dwellers who are not used to the dust, noise, and smells of farming. This session, the legislature must revise land use laws, including Measure 37, so that they protect valuable farmland while providing a fair, consistent legal framework for land use.

Fix Measure 37 to protect farmland and bring more fairness to land use rules.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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