



NEWS

Oregon Legislature - House Democratic Caucus

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 28, 2013

CONTACT: Lindsey O'Brien (503) 986-1907
or lindsey.obrien@state.or.us

House expands connection between schools and local farms

Farm to School program supports local agriculture, nutrition education

SALEM – The House of Representatives today passed legislation that will help Oregon farmers and schools serve Oregon grown products to students.

House Bill 2649B will add \$500,000 to Oregon's Farm to School program, which was created in 2011 as part of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National School Lunch Program. Similar programs nationwide enable schools to offer fresh, locally sourced products in their cafeterias, and to design hands-on learning experiences including farm visits, gardening, cooking, composting and recycling.

"Farm to School is a proven success," said Representative Ben Unger (D – Hillsboro), a sponsor of the bill. "Schools, students, and local farmers all benefit from this program – I'm glad we're expanding its reach."

HB 2649B calls upon the Department of Education to reimburse school districts that purchase Oregon food products with \$0.15 for every school lunch they serve. The bill also revises a grant program that will offset added costs from purchasing Oregon food products and fund certain food-based and garden-based educational activities.

"We're improving the health of our school children, regional farms, the environment, economy, and our communities," said Representative Brian Clem (D – Salem), chief sponsor of the bill. "Oregon farmers feeding Oregon kids – that's what it's all about."

HB 2649B passed the House unanimously and now heads to the Oregon Senate.

###