



## SENATE MAJORITY OFFICE

Oregon State Legislature  
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### NEWS RELEASE

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#### **Senate vote invests in local farms and nutritious meals for students**

*HB 2649B expands the Farm to School program, which supports local agriculture and children's nutrition*

SALEM—Today the Oregon Senate passed legislation that helps local farmers sell Oregon-grown produce to schools. House Bill 2649B, which makes an additional investment in Oregon's Farm to School program, passed the Senate on a vote of 27-0 with three excused.

“Oregon's Farm to School program sustains our economy by supporting local farmers and providing healthy, nourishing meals to students across the state,” said Senator Alan Bates (D-Medford). “Providing additional investment for this successful program means we can support more local farms, teach students about nutrition and local produce, and provide more Oregon-grown produce at school.”

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.

“When you think of what we grow on the east side of the mountains, what we grow on the west side of the mountains and the diversity of it, farmers in Oregon have been growing some of the best vegetables and fruit for 150 years. This Farm to School bill will ensure that our children grow up and continue to eat fresh, local products grown right here,” said Senator Arnie Roblan (D-Coos Bay). “Farm to School improves the health of our children and strengthens the vitality of our rural communities.”

HB 2649B encourages the Oregon Department of Education to reimburse \$0.15 for every school lunch served to school districts that purchase Oregon-grown food products. In addition, the bill funds certain educational programs that focus on nutrition and gardening education, and revises a grant program that offsets additional costs incurred from purchasing Oregon-grown produce.

House Bill 2649B now proceeds to Governor John A. Kitzhaber for his approval.

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