Dear Governor Brown,

Oregon’s agriculture community has watched as several jurisdictions in other states have implemented “shelter in place orders” in response to the Coronavirus. As Oregon begins to discuss strategy for the possible implementation of a “shelter-in-place” order or other limitations on commercial activity, either locally or statewide, we ask that the agriculture sector be recognized as critical/essential and exempt from such limitations.

In order to prevent a disruption in Oregon’s food and agriculture supply chain, we ask that you designate agriculture and related activities it depends upon and all employees therein engaged as essential and exempting the following essential business activities:

- Agriculture, including farming, livestock, fishing and all commercial activities that are necessary for the production, processing, and movement of agricultural inputs and products including fuel, fertilizer, feed, crop protection, and animal health products.

- Processing, preparation, storage, fermentation, and inspection/certification of raw, prepared, and/or processed ag products.

- Grocery stores, certified farmers’ markets, farm and produce stands, supermarkets, food banks, convenience stores, and other establishments engaged in the retail sale of food and any other household consumer products, stores that sell non-grocery products, and products necessary to maintaining the safety, sanitation, and essential operation of residences, businesses, and institutions, including hardware, garden centers and home improvement stores.

Oregon’s agriculture community is composed of thousands of hard-working ranch and farm families who are currently complying with social distancing, sanitation standards, and other suggested practices to ensure their ability to continue playing a vital role in Oregon's food and ag supply chain. Our members are committed to working alongside you to help flatten the curve of this pandemic.