



NATIONAL GRANGE

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American Values. Hometown Roots.

April 9, 2021

The Honorable Ron Wyden
SD-221 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Wyden:

Thank you for your sponsorship of S. 487, the 21st Century Conservation Corps Act. The National Grange supports many of the priority issues set forth in this important legislation.

We would like to suggest that you add an amendment to the Act to specifically mention a Farm Corps program for apprenticeships and mentoring of new and beginning farmers. Your constituent June Colony, agriculture director for the Oregon State Grange, has been in contact with your district office on this matter. She is currently teaching apprentices on her farm in Oregon and is passionate about expanding this opportunity through the National Grange using the Corps model to create Farm Food Corps nationwide.

We believe that a new category of Farm Corps could not only provide assistance to older farmers and help transition their farms to a new generation but would also be a training ground for additional new farmers desiring to enter the business. Because traditional Corps have a strong educational element, these new Farm Corps could bring future oriented, well educated, and diverse farming families to establish small farms either on their own or in partnership with existing owners. This could revitalize rural communities and provide urban farms with new marketing opportunities.

Agriculture and food production are vital to our national security. The National Grange believes a Farm Corps program could help ensure food security for more Americans.

Sincerely,

Betsy E. Huber
President

cc. Senator Jeff Merkley