

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20510

October 13, 2026

The Honorable Brooke L. Rollins
Secretary of the Department of Agriculture
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave, S.W.
Washington D.C., 20250

Dear Secretary Rollins:

We write in strong support of the U.S. Hazelnut Industry request that the Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) pursue Section 32 purchases of U.S.-grown hazelnut kernels for the fiscal years 2026-2027.

The hazelnut industry has a significant history in Oregon; its roots date back to 1858, when the first tree was planted, and Oregon has since become the epicenter of commercial hazelnut production in the United States. Hazelnuts are grown primarily by family farms in Willamette Valley and processed locally in communities across Oregon. The hazelnut industry is a massive and integral part of our state's agricultural economy; its size and longevity represent generations of farmers and handlers who have dedicated their lives to producing and distributing a product many communities depend on for their livelihoods.

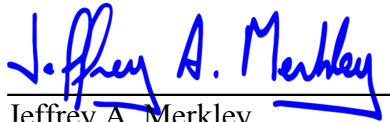
With that in mind, we must recognize and seek to address the challenges the industry faces both domestically and abroad. Our state's hazelnut growers and processors compete in a global market heavily influenced by tariffs, foreign government support of competing production, import and export policies, and other trade actions.

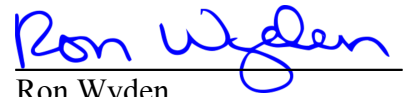
In recent years, disruptions in important export markets caused by these compounding issues have been particularly difficult for certain kernel sizes and grades that are high-quality, marketable food products but have fewer commercial outlets. These imbalances and market losses create uncertainty and pressure for our farmers and producers and threaten the steady distribution needed to prevent compounding product surpluses year to year.

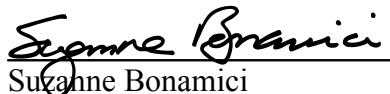
The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has successfully purchased Oregon hazelnuts through Section 32 in prior years, with product distributed through federal nutrition assistance channels. We ask that the USDA continue to be a strong partner with Oregon's agricultural sector and provide the industry with the relief needed to address these market imbalances. A Section 32 purchase would help address this immediate market need and support domestic distribution and consumption of a nutritious, versatile, U.S.-grown product.

We request your full and fair consideration of this Section 32 purchase request and look forward to working with you in support of the Oregon hazelnut industry.

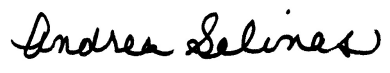
Sincerely,


Jeffrey A. Merkley
United States Senator


Ron Wyden
United States Senator


Suzanne Bonamici
Member of Congress


Val Hoyle
Member of Congress


Andrea Salinas
Member of Congress


Janelle S. Bynum
Member of Congress


Maxine Dexter, M.D.
Member of Congress