Oregon State University
College of Agricultural Sciences

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OSU Academic Programs Committee and Curriculum Council:

As Assistant Dean of Academic Programs for the College of Agricultural Sciences, I am writing in support of the Applied Economics proposal to change the name of their current undergraduate degree of Agricultural Business Management to Agricultural and Food Business Management.

The proposed degree title reflects both changes in the curriculum of the current ABM degree and the larger disciplinary changes across agricultural economics and business programs in the U.S. The Applied Economics department has been changing course content and titles to reflect a larger perspective of business in the agricultural sector. Agricultural economics and business has always included as part of their disciplinary studies all of the sectors along the food chain, including production, processing, and consumption. Current consumer knowledge tends to attach perceptions to large commodity production to the term agriculture. Growth in consumer demands for organic, local and other specialty products and processing has attracted attention to not just "agricultural" production but "food", in its many forms. Following this trend, many departments across the nation, as documented in the proposal, have been including "food" in their identities, both departmental and degrees.

The diversity of academic and research studies in the College of Agricultural Sciences well supports this name change. From agronomics to fermentation, the entire food chain is studied in CAS. A degree, and appropriate title, which studies the business side of these processes is highly valued and appropriate.
The change will have little to no financial effects on the department or college. While the new title will enhance recruiting opportunities.

Sincerely,

Penny Diebel

Penelope L. Diebel
Assistant Dean for Academic Programs
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