



Jenifer Cruickshank, PhD
Department of Animal & Rangeland Sciences
Oregon State University
121 Withycombe Hall
Corvallis, OR 97331

June 2, 2026

RE: Letter of collaboration for the proposed project *Evaluating the Use of Foster Cows: Effects on Calves, Cows, and Profitability*

Dear Dr. Cruickshank,

The mission of the Western Organic Dairy Producers Alliance (WODPA) is to preserve, protect, and ensure the sustainability and integrity of organic dairy farming across the West. WODPA represents the collective voice of our producers at the local, state and national levels. We share the organic dairy producers' perspective when lobbying on crucial issues currently facing dairy producers, and we work in collaboration with national organic advocacy groups and industry stakeholders to provide perspective on what matters most to our organic producers. We are writing this letter in support of the WSARE Research & Education grant proposed project entitled *Evaluating the Use of Foster Cows: Effects on Calves, Cows, and Profitability* being submitted by Oregon State University.

Our members are interested in alternative husbandry practices, particularly those that can improve animal welfare while maintaining or increasing productivity. This project is a comprehensive investigation of the effects of using a foster cow system to raise preweaned calves, with data collected on both calves and foster cows. We would eagerly anticipate the animal performance outcomes and the economic analysis.

Collaborative, producer-engaged efforts such as this are essential to improving animal health and welfare outcomes, while strengthening the long-term resilience and sustainability of organic dairy farms. WODPA is pleased to support this proposal and looks forward to the research being reported.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Lia Sieler'.

Lia Sieler, Executive Director

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