

Portland, Ore. – Today Congressman Blumenauer (D-Ore.), a member of the Budget and Ways and Means Committees, led a forum to discuss the 2007 Farm Bill. Along with Congressman Sam Farr (D-CA), a member of the Appropriations Subcommittee on Agriculture, and other key stakeholders, Congressman Blumenauer addressed the need for a farm bill that is more fiscally responsible and good for Oregon, good for farmers, and good for the environment.

“I started preparing for today's event more than five years ago when I worked with my colleague Congressman Farr and others to change the last farm bill,” said Blumenauer. “Here in Oregon we produce more agricultural output in sales than North Dakota, yet that state receives nearly six times the amount of subsidies in the farm bill.”

“As I've been out on the ground in Oregon and the greater United States, I realize we are rediscovering American agriculture. The challenges are great – high energy costs, environmental safeguards, the pressures of urban growth, and market uncertainties – and they must be addressed. The need for healthy agriculture has never been greater, and I look forward to building on the collaboration we've started today with our partners.”

Every five years, Congress reauthorizes the Farm Bill, setting policy for American agriculture and authorizing billions in spending. At today's Farm Bill Forum, cosponsored by Oregon State University and Portland State University, Congressman Blumenauer led a group of panelists that included members of the Oregon House and Senate, experts from state agencies, farmers and other agricultural stakeholders, and business and environmental organizations.