

My name is Takashi Ishizaki. I am here today representing my company Tohoku Seed Company limited.

Tohoku is a vegetable breeding and sales company headquarters in Utsunomiya, Japan. We have an intensive breeding program to develop our own varieties which we sell throughout the world.

Our company was founded 65 years ago and is still family owned. We are in the top 3 vegetable seed companies in Japan. Our annual sales revenue is over 100 million US dollars per year.

We have been producing vegetable seeds in the Willamette Valley for approximately 30 years,.

All of our competitors from Japan also produce significant amounts of vegetable seed here as well. The Willamette Valley is a critical production resource for the Japanese and worldwide vegetable seed trade. All major vegetable seed companies worldwide have seed production here.

Oregon's Willamette Valley is not the cheapest place to produce our brassica seeds. However, it is the best place. We get the best seed quality and reliability of production compared to anywhere else in the world. This is due to the ideal growing conditions, very enthusiastic and technical growers, and the sophistication of the seed producing companies.

The Willamette Valley commands high price for their crops but we are willing to pay that price since quality and reliability are more important than price in the vegetable seed business. It is not exaggeration to say that my company has been expanding our business to be one of top 3 companies in Japan and we could build our reputation of selling high quality seeds because of the Willamette Valley seed production.

Approximately 40% of my company's total annual turnover is from the seeds produced in the Willamette Valley. This includes brassica's, radish, spinach, and other different crops. Of our brassica seed crops, 70% of our sales depend on seed from here. As you can imagine we are highly concerned about any threat to the continued safety of seed production here.

We have been monitoring this situation with extreme concern since 2005. In 2007, I testified by telephone for a hearing with the Oregon Department of Agriculture asking that they continue to provide protection from the production of Canola. We were very satisfied and relieved that the Oregon Department of Agriculture provided full protection for the Willamette Valley seed industry with their administrative rule. We are now very distressed that this has been changed.

If something is not done to provide long <sup>term</sup> ~~turn~~ protection from Canola then my company and other companies will need to immediately start looking for other places to produce our seed, so that we are already prepared when the seed production here begins to fail. We do not look forward to this prospect as we have very few good areas worldwide.

Everyone will be competing for that limited resources. We expect that if Canola production is allowed, it will just be a matter of time before we have problems with outcrossing, physically seed contamination, increase of insect and disease pressure. There are the same problems we have seen elsewhere in the worldwide such as Europe, Australia, and the southern California. This situation presents a huge problem and uncertainty for our company.

I ~~am~~ very appreciate that you have given me the opportunity to speak to you on this very important subject. I understand that this is an issue that you have to solve within Oregon. However, please take into account that your decisions will have very serious and worldwide consequences. My company is asking you to please protect the future of vegetable seed production in the Willamette Valley by continuing to restrict the production of Canola.