



*"Making Every*

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**Testimony before the House Committee on  
Agriculture and Natural Resources  
Respectfully Submitted by Blake Rowe, CEO of the  
The Oregon Wheat Growers League  
March 19, 2013**

**Chair Witt and Members of the Committee:**

RE: Opposition to HB 2427

The Oregon Wheat Growers League (OWGL), a trade organization of over 1400 wheat and barley producers across the state, is opposing HB 2427 and implores you to be concerned about the premise behind this legislation before you today.

Canola was developed in Canada through conventional plant breeding from rapeseed, an oilseed plant used in ancient civilizations for fuel. The seed when harvested contains about 44 percent oil which is used in many products including biofuels, lubricants, newspaper inks, candles and lipstick. It is a key ingredient in many foods and is highly prized for its heart-healthy properties. Its reputation as a healthy oil has created a high demand in markets around the world, and it is the third most widely consumed vegetable oil in the world. Demand for canola for both food production and biofuels has increased significantly in recent years driving the demand for more crop production in Oregon.

As a broad-leaf, deep-rooted crop, canola provides a significant benefit as a rotation crop to wheat producers by helping to break disease and pest cycles and reduce the need for herbicides and fungicides. As no-till farming practices evolve, this benefit becomes significantly more important.

What HB 2427 seeks to do is allow the state of Oregon to pick winners and losers in agricultural production. Currently the Department of Agriculture (ODA) maintains responsibility to develop control areas for the purpose of protecting crops from pests and diseases but their authority does not extend to regulation of product for market purposes. Co-existence is something that farmers have faced since agriculture began. It can, and should be, more effectively managed with the use of buffers and the coordination among farmers than by having the state pick which crops it will allow. Markets can change more quickly than the legislative process will allow and this could damage Oregon's agricultural industry by seeking a solution outside of the process currently in place.

OWGL asks that you oppose HB 2427 and that you continue to support Oregon agriculture by allowing ODA to continue providing an effective, responsive approach to issues such as this through their work in developing control districts. Agriculture is Oregon's second largest traded sector industry and needs support from **all** legislators to keep it healthy and vibrant.