

**SB 815 The Senate Committee on Judiciary  
Monday April 8 at 9:00 AM in Hearing Room 343.**

Chairman Prozanski and Committee members,

My name is John Zielinski, I farm and operate a farm direct market, E.Z. Orchards, just northeast of Salem. I reside at 5270 55<sup>th</sup> Ave. NE Salem.

I support SB 815 which stipulates reasonable responsibility and liability for agri-tourism providers .

Each fall we offer school tours, a pumpkin patch and corn maze for the general public on our farm. Agri-Tourism provides a wonderful opportunity for farmers to educate the public about where their food and fiber come from. We have over 7,000 school children visit our farm each fall. For many it is their first experience on a farm seeing where and how crops are grown. Our school tours are based on school curriculum and we seek feedback from teachers to guarantee that a visit to our farm is educational as well as fun. Agri-tourism also gives farmers a chance to achieve higher returns by selling directly to the public by-passing the sometimes numerous middlemen.

Though we plan for the safety of our guests, have safety meetings, and do everything that we can to provide a safe farm visit. There are certain risks that are inherent on farms, people can trip on pumpkin vines, get a "paper cut" from corn stalks, fall off of a hay bale, or tip over a wheelbarrow full of pumpkins.

Because of these inherent risks, most insurance companies will not insure farms where the public is welcomed. There is only one "standard" insurance company that will insure farms with Fall harvest festival activities in Oregon. That company is Country, which probably would not cover agri-tourism either, if not for their financial tie to Farm Bureau. Because there is only one company offering the insurance, it puts farmers at a disadvantage when trying to get competitive bids for insurance. There are several agri-tourism operations that have needed to start using high risk, high expense event insurance.

Chairman Prozanski and Committee members I urge your support of SB 815 which will give farmers who operate agri-tourism activities peace of mind that they not at risk of being dropped by their insurance company or losing their farm due to things that are beyond their control. To know that they have reasonable responsibility and liability, would be a great relief.

Thank you for your time.