

**Testimony of the Oregon Farmers' Markets Association for HB 2427
Ways & Means subcommittee on Natural Resources**

The Oregon Farmers' Markets Association supports HB 2427 and still feels there should ultimately be a permanent ban for rapeseed/canola in the Willamette Valley.

We understand that a compromise was needed to bring this bill before you today, and we can all live with a five-year moratorium.

While we feel that prior research by OSU and from around the world already presents a compelling case against this crop in our agricultural jewel of a valley, it is now time to determine precisely what further research is appropriate and a good use of the state's limited resources.

The design should be affordable and allow no more canola acreage than is absolutely necessary, unless it is done in other regions where canola/rapeseed is already present. It should employ acreage that is managed the way farmers actually manage canola -- given the absence of market incentive for perfect management -- and there should be adjacent test plots of organic brassica crops to measure damage.

Research that is designed to undermine findings of the prior research and somehow prove that coexistence is viable -- or that we face an equal threat from turnips and radishes -- is not an appropriate use of state funds. Please do not forget that because of different market tolerances, ALL the harm falls on the specialty seed growers, red clover growers, and vegetable growers.

I would submit that research to find good rotation crops for grass seed farmers in non-irrigated areas should be the highest priority. They need viable winter rotation crops since open field burning was limited to 15,000 acres a year. The housing bust torched residential grass seed sales, and these farmers are looking for a revenue crop as well as a pest break.

Yes, this is about money and not just science. But if you follow the money, you'll agree that you don't fix a problem for one group of farmers by permanently destroying a world-class market for another group of farmers.

Thank you again for the opportunity to address this critical issue from the perspective of growers who sell at farmers' markets and other farm-direct venues.

Rebecca Landis
Immediate past president and policy adviser