

I am a farmer from the Willamette Valley, raising tulips, potatoes, vegetables and other crops. I have served on the Oregon Potato Commission, the Vegetable Commission and currently serve as chairman of the Commodity Commission Advisory Committee. Not only am I familiar with the potato industry, but am aware of some of the other commissions are facing similar challenges of representation in their districts to better reflect the industries.

I am supportive of changes to allow Commodity Commissions to adjust their representation as changes occur in their industries.

When I first served on the Oregon Potato Commission almost 30 years ago, there were over a dozen potato growers locally, now there are only 4 remaining. Likewise, I have seen dramatic changes in the number of growers in other parts of the state. When I was first on the commission there were two representatives from Central Oregon, two from Klamath, two from Blue Mountain, two from Malheur and one from the Willamette Valley, currently in Central Oregon there are only two growers left. However a number of years ago a position was shifted to Blue Mountain because of the larger amount of production in the Blue Mountain District.

Recently there was a vacancy in the Malheur district. Every Malheur grower was asked to apply without response. We can't force participation, but the commission needs representation.

Statute is definite, but acreage within a district isn't. This is the current acreage % by district. Klamath 14%, Malheur 7%, Central Or. & Willamette 2% each, Blue Mt 77%. District boundaries were set when acreage was similar per district.

Commissions are able to make adjustments when commissioners are temporary, but not when they are established according to Department of Justice. With the current requirements even without production an area must be represented or the position cannot be filled for one year.

This change would allow continued representation from areas of production within the state and allow commissions to better serve the growers in the communities.