

**From:** Kent Knock [<mailto:kentknock@yahoo.com>]  
**Sent:** Sunday, March 10, 2013 10:07 AM  
**To:** Rancier Racquel  
**Subject:** SB633

Dear Ms. Rancier:

Please accept this as testimony AGAINST SB633.

I am a seed farmer in Jackson County (Afternoon Zephyr Farm, Rogue River). Please note that the Rogue River valley in Jackson and Josephine counties is a unique location relative to seed growing. Our valley is relatively narrow with mountains, trees, etc that allow for many small "isolations". That is, there are barriers that separate small fields from each other so that the fields are "isolated" from each others with respect to wind and insect spread pollen. In order to grow good seed of wind and insect pollinated crops it is necessary that each variety be pollinated by only the desired pollen. Therefore, in the Rogue valley, we have a wonderful "commons" consisting of these isolations as well as our desirable climate for seed growing.

Another aspect of the small fields in this area is that the farms tend to be very small. There is just not room for big fields! That means there are many small farmers trying to make money off these small fields. One way to do that is to produce a high value crop: seeds. This is the sort of crop that allows small farmers to actually make a living. In order to have small farmers producing a diversity of seed crops in this unique location, we need to control the growing of seed locally. Each farmer has to consider what his neighbors are growing so that the seed crop is not contaminated by undesirable pollen. That can only be done by local cooperation. SB633 would over-ride local efforts and allow whomever has power in the Oregon legislature to make decisions for us that would make it impossible to produce some valuable seed types. Please kill SB633!

There is another issue involved here. SB633 is an effort to prevent the local control of biotechnology and GMOs (genetically engineered organisms). It would allow companies like Monsanto and Syngenta to use their influence to increase the spread of genetically engineered(GM) genes. Those companies could then swamp the Rogue Valley with GM genes in wind or insect pollinated crops. That would mean that we could not grow "organic" or GM-free seed. Those non-GM seed crops are exactly the ones that produce the high value that we small farmers need to grow here to prosper. Please kill SB633!

Yet another aspect of this situation is that there is a specific crop being grown in the Rogue Valley that interferes with GM-free seed of beets and chard. The species of sugar beets is the same as that of table beets and chard. The pollen of this species is very easily spread by the wind and crosses with other beets and chard. Syngenta apparently has some sort of breeding program in the Rogue Valley that involves many small patches of sugar beets, which are probably GMOs. That means that any seed crop of organic or non-GM table beets or chard will be contaminated and unsalable if cooperation and control is not increased. SB633 would make such cooperation unnecessary for Syngenta. They could then use our local commons for their profits for their Swiss corporation-- an extremely unfair situation. By the way, Syngenta cannot grow their GM crops at home in Switzerland because that is against Swiss law. Now Syngenta and other Big Bio companies are trying to prevent even small locations like the Rogue Valley from controlling their own destiny relative to seed production. Please kill SB633!

Thank you very much for your consideration.

Kent Knock