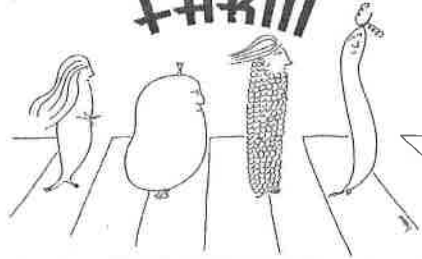




# ABBIE LANE FARM



5845 Abbie Lane • (541) 582-0482 • Gold Hill, OR 97525

As owners of a small organic farming system we were shocked and alarmed to learn of **Senate Bill 633**.

We have owned and operated an *Oregon Tilth* certified organic vegetable and fruit farm in the Rogue Valley for the past 11 years. As many organic farms do we grow out and save a portion of our seeds to save on cost and to develop regionally adapted varieties. There are many organic growers that have concentrated their efforts on the seed growing aspect of organic farming, as the need for certified organic seed has never been greater.

Approximately 4-5 years ago we discovered (by chance) that a neighbor's property was being leased out to grow GE (genetically engineered) sugar beets (*Beta vulgaris* species). *Syngenta* did not then nor have they ever notified us of this practice. Our property was and is visibly marked as an organic farm. This GE growing ground is less than 1/8<sup>th</sup> of a mile away. The likely hood of cross contamination with our *Beta vulgaris* crops (ie. table beets and chard) is a given. Our organic certifying agency, per the policies set in place by the National Organic Program, will not allow us to save these seeds and grow out as an organic crop due to the close proximity of this GE growing ground.

This brings us to our concern over Senate Bill 633. Our county (Jackson) has obtained a qualifying number of signatures to place an initiative on the ballot that will address the future of GE crops in our valley. Whether you're pro or anti GE food crops I would ask you why would one be in favor of taking our voting rights away? Bill 633 does exactly that. We are simply seeking to obtain some semblance of control over our regional food supply and maintain economic viability for our small farms.

You must not take our voice away by eliminating our ability to vote.

The Oregon Farm Bureau initiated this bill. Per state records the Oregon Farm Bureau receives 25% of its funds from *Monsanta* and *Syngenta*. Put simply, this bill is a biotech-backed piece of legislation that serves to take away the rights of Oregon Counties to manage their local agriculture.

**We wish these comments to be submitted as testimony for public hearing.**

Tom Ponder  
Glenda Ponder  
Abbie Lane Farm  
5845 Abbie Lane  
Gold Hill Oregon 97525  
541.941.4420

*Tom Ponder*  
*Glenda Ponder*

3-9-13  
13

Oregon Tilth Identification Number: OR-OTCO-CO-02-00953