

3/11/13

Dear Senator,

Please vote no on SB633

As a mother of 5 hungry growing boys I am deeply concerned about the purity and diversity of the local food supply. SB633 is a power grab for Syngenta Corporation, as Swiss company, to have uninhibited rein over the food and seed supply in Oregon. We don't need a cookie cutter food supply sure to arise from corporate control to degrade the diverse healthy fare that Oregon families are supporting at an ever increasing rate. What gives Oregon its character in the food economy is the diversity of offerings from organic wine and beer to the heirloom fruit and vegetables found at farmers markets and restaurants. If counties lose their ability to regulate organic safe zones, the consequences will be irreversible. GE open pollinated crops are already planted in areas of the Rogue Valley threatening to contaminate our organic food supply. My 5 children deserve to have a choice whether to be eating GE foods in their future. Passing SB633 will be a step in the direction of eliminating that choice as counties will not be able to create organic safe zones to protect our remaining pure seed and food crops.

As a mother of 5 sons who I am raising to do well and also do good I am concerned that taking control of agricultural products from counties will inhibit job growth in the fastest growing consumer food sector- the organic food industry. Jackson County's unemployment rate is at 11.6%. Our neighboring county's (Josephine) unemployment rate is at 13.2%. According to the USDA "Organic farming has been one of the fastest growing segments of US agriculture for over a decade." According to the Organic Trade Association's Families' Organic Attitudes and Beliefs Study 78% of families say they are choosing organic foods. Numerous businesses and cultural centers in Oregon, such as the Shakespeare Festival attract tourism that rests on a culture that features organic cuisine. Organic agriculture is a value written into city charters in Oregon. Oregon had \$155,613,000 total organic agriculture sales in 2008 and has shown an 18% increase annually. Amy's Organic's in White City Oregon indicated that if our region can supply them with the organic non-gmo corn that they will buy it, representing an opportunity for jobs in our county's organic industry. If SB633 passes, organic standards on which the expected rapid growth of the organic industry depends will be threatened, thus threatening new job opportunities in Jackson County. National Organic Regulations include prohibition of genetically modified organisms in organic production. SB633 will not allow organic farmers to protect their crops and land from contamination due to open pollinating GE crops already planted in our region. SB633 will result in an assault on the thriving organic industry that is a beacon of hope in rural Oregon counties. Please vote no on SB633 and let the people in Oregon counties make our own choices about our food economy.

Sincerely,

Sunny J. Lindley