



Threemile Canyon Farms, LLC

Columbia River Dairy, LLC Castle Rock Farming, LLC Sixmile Land and Cattle, LLC

Testimony of Jeff Wendler, D.V.M, NW Livestock Manager
Threemile Canyon Farms

To the Oregon Senate Committee on Health Care
In Opposition to SB 920

April 6, 2015

Chair Monnes Anderson and Members of the Senate Health Care Committee,

My name is Jeff Wendler, D.V.M.

I am the Northwest Livestock Manager for Threemile Canyon Farms – a leading produce and dairy farm located near Boardman Oregon. I am a licensed veterinarian and currently serve on a national panel focusing on animal welfare. The proper care and treatment of our herd is my professional life's work and my passion.

At Threemile Canyon Farms, we milk approximately 30% of Oregon's dairy cows – and I am proud to say that under my care and the care of the 5 full-time Veterinarians, two consulting Veterinarians, and one full time PhD Nutritionist, our lactating herd has been antibiotic free for the past 4 years.

So while I agree with and applaud this Committee's concern for animal welfare and the public issues raised by the misuse of certain drugs in the treatment of livestock, I am here today to testify in opposition to SB 920 because, by its terms, SB 920 will not insure any additional protection for animal welfare, the public health or consumers. SB 920 will create excess bureaucracy and a litigation machine that will be a detriment to Oregon farmers, cattle and consumers.

The flaws of SB 920 are obvious:

- it creates a duplicative and wasteful regulatory scheme already addressed by a federal agency with clear expertise in this area [the FDA];
- the significant issues raised in SB 920 have already been considered and will be fully addressed by the Veterinary Feed Directive to be implemented in 2016;
- Section 4 and Section 6 are tailor-made for increased litigation not improved animal welfare. For the person caring for a herd, what guidance is found in the terms "shortest duration necessary" [page 2, line 24, 25]...or "smallest number of food-producing animals necessary" [page 2, lines 26, 27]...why create a right of action for persons "aggrieved by a violation" [page 3, line 18] without defining what that means. And then bankrolling the "aggrieved" suing party but not penalizing a lawsuit brought to harass or cause mischief?

Let me repeat that I take the issues of animal welfare and public health very seriously – and Threemile Canyon Farms applies our values in a robust and intentional way to implement programs and protocols to protect our animals, the public and our customers. I have attached a copy of our Protocols for Antibiotic use to this testimony...but let me mention a few highlights:

1. We have an Animal Welfare Committee which meets monthly, made up of management and the union members of the United Farm Workers who work at our dairy operation.
2. We engage an independent consultant from Evergreen College as our Animal Welfare Advocate to represent our animals as we develop animal welfare protocols and training procedures...and incorporate emerging research into our operations
3. We retain an independent third party auditor, with national credentials – the company Validus – to quarterly visits and grade us on standards they have established for "best practices" in the nation.

In conclusion, you should demand that Oregon be a leader in animal welfare and public health issues. I am here to tell you that you don't need SB 920 to achieve that goal...and ask you respectfully to reject SB 920 and work even more closely with the Oregon agriculture community that shares your values and is committed to optimizing herd health, public safety and consumer protection.

Thank you