

From: Amy Patton [<mailto:kapatton@jeffnet.org>]
Sent: Thursday, May 21, 2015 8:36 PM
To: Reiley Beth
Subject: NO on HB 2509

Hello Beth,

Please forward the following to your committee. Thanks.

Jackson County voters passed a GMO ban with a large majority. The reason Jackson County voted for the ban is because we understand that GMO crops grown in one field are notorious for contaminating other farmers' fields. The only way that farmers can protect their NON-GMO crops is to grow them in large areas which have protection from GMO contamination. For some reason, Monsanto has been winning lawsuits, claiming that the farmers whose fields become contaminated with GMO plants have to PAY damages to Monsanto and other GMO manufacturers for "stealing" their patented product. This is completely wrong. But forcing farmers injured by GMO contamination into "mediation" through a state agency that has been actively supportive of GMO crops, and is therefore biased, is also wrong.

ODA is a state agency and should be operating for the benefit of all farmers and actively SUPPORTING efforts like that of Jackson County, to preserve a haven for non-GMO food products. Smart farmers know that markets in Europe are refusing crops that show any sign of GMO contamination. More and more countries are only buying products made from non-GMO crops.

Jackson County knows this and wants Southern Oregon to be a market force for Oregon agriculture. A non-GMO county will create greater demand for Jackson County land and food products.

ODA should view the Jackson County GMO ban as a helpful experiment. Allow it to proceed as envisioned and see if, as growers in the area expect, property values climb with demand for the non-GMO product produced here.

Isn't supporting farmers and assisting Oregon agriculture to be stronger what the Department of Agriculture is all about?

Please vote NO of HB 2509.

Thank you,

Amy Patton
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