

## Oregon's agriculture and forestry community urges your NO vote on HB 4122.

We believe there is a market for organic, conventional, GE, identity preserved—all types of agriculture in Oregon. However, setting these restrictions city by city and county by county will result in a devastating patchwork of polices for Oregon's farmers.

### Creates Patchwork of County and City Seed Regulations

As drafted, this bill will result in a patchwork of 36 different county regulations and over 400 city regulations on agricultural crops if they are genetically engineered (GE). Currently, Oregon law ensures that all growers in Oregon operate on a level playing field, regardless of what county they live in. It is very common for farmers and foresters to have land in multiple counties, and oftentimes a single field can straddle county boundaries.

### Removes Farmer's Flexibility to Shift Crops to Market

Currently, farmers and foresters decide what type of crop to plant in any given year based on a wide variety of considerations. Markets, soil types, crop rotations, expected weather—all of these affect planting decisions. For dairy and livestock producers, their decision making hinges upon their need to feed their herd a balanced diet containing crops grown on or near their farms. Whether their county or city has banned certain types of seed should not be something farmers and foresters need to consider.

### Restricts Important Crops

GE crops allow farmers to produce better yields while consuming less water, soil, and pesticides. In 2010, the reduction in carbon dioxide from the atmosphere from the use of GE crops and related practices, was more than 21 million tons-- equivalent to 8.6 million cars off the road for one year. Recently approved GE crops, such as the "Innate" potato and "Arctic" apple offer health benefits to consumers by removing carcinogens and reducing bruising. Even more exciting are crops that are being developed now that will be drought resistant, contain more nutrients and healthier oils, or have allergens removed.

### USDA Approval Confirms No Unique Risk from GE Crops

GE plants are evaluated by the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), which is part of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), to determine if they are a risk to other crops as a plant pest. All of the commercialized GE crops have undergone this review and have been determined to be no more of a risk than their non-GE counterparts.

GE crops pose no unique risk to neighboring crops than their non-GE counterparts. For example, the adventitious presence of GE material does not affect USDA Organic status. So, as long as an organic grower takes the proper precautions as required under the USDA rules, they are at no risk of losing certification. In fact, not a single farmer has ever lost their USDA Organic certification due to the adventitious presence of GE material.

### County and City Regulations Could Result in Forcing Farmers to Tear out Crops

Currently proposed county ordinances would force farmers to tear out crops and lose a year or more of investment with no reimbursement. Additionally, there are pending proposals that will expose farmers to costly third party lawsuits over the crops they choose to grow.

**On behalf of Oregon's agriculture and forestry community we urge your NO vote on HB 4122.**

