



**KIRSCH**

*Family Farms, Inc.*

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March 8, 2017

Senate Committee on Environment and Natural Resources

Chair Dembrow and members of the committee,

My name is Brenda Frketich and I'm the owner of Kirsch Family Farms, in St. Paul, Oregon. I am the third generation on my family's sustainable farm, where we grow vegetables, vegetables seeds, hazelnuts, grass seed, wheat and clover. I farm alongside my husband and our two sons, it is a true family operation.

Thank you for taking the time today to listen to testimony on Senate Bill 1008. I would like to tell you how much I appreciate your allowing of exemptions for on and off road vehicles for agriculture. Truly our ability to recoup the costs associated with this bill would be so detrimental to us farmers. It shows that you understand what a specialized and important industry agriculture is to the state of Oregon.

I am still concerned however about still having to provide a full inventory of our equipment to the state of Oregon. Honestly while we are busy fighting so many bills in the legislature every year, my biggest concern is that these equipment inventories would be held against us, such as for the use of taxation in the future. The inventory of our equipment is something that shouldn't be needed, unless the state was looking to gain from it, and taxation is an easy and scary correlation. When calculating for my testimony against personal property tax, I found that taxation of our equipment that is only used for such a small portion of the year, would do great harm to our farm and our industry. Not to mention farm equipment is a lifetime and sometimes generational investment. I'm still using some of the equipment that my grandpa built for our farm, and to have that on a list of equipment that could get taxed, seems like an overreach.

I just hope that when considering this bill you look at the fact that, as you thankfully recognized in the exemptions that have been already made, agriculture is a unique industry. In some years pieces of our equipment actually never leaves the barn because the weather doesn't allow for it. While at other times only for a few weeks a year. Below is a photo of one of our storage sheds.



I took an inventory of the average days these pieces of equipment was used in the past year. The average was only 12 days per piece of equipment! Which equates to only about 130-180 hours per year. This is just one simple example of the uniqueness of being a farmer.

Thank you again for your time and consideration of SB 1008. I appreciate so much the exemptions that have been put in place for farmers already, I just ask that you please take a hard long look at the possible future repercussions of what providing an inventory might look like and the harm it could do to the agricultural industry.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brenda Frketich". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being more prominent.

Brenda Frketich

St. Paul, Oregon

Blog: [www.nuttygrass.com](http://www.nuttygrass.com)