

Dear Ms. Freeman:

I am writing in support of HB 2469, which would return local control to counties regarding agriculture decisions.

In 2013, I stood with local organic farmers against a legislature doing the bidding of chemical companies and GMO patent holders, and prevented local Oregon farmers from protecting themselves against genetic contamination and pesticide drift. It was a sad day for Oregon when the legislature ignored the will of Oregonians (I was one of them) who packed hearing rooms and attended meetings in such numbers that the locations had to be moved.

Organic agriculture in Oregon brings in \$18.5 million dollars per year for local farmers, and more importantly, organic demand is growing by 20% per year.

<http://oregonprogress.oregonstate.edu/fall-2005/oregon-organic>

*It is because* demand for organic agriculture is the fastest growing sector that chemical companies and seed patent holders (e.g. Monsanto) are seeking to hamstring local control.

*Make no mistake: Small, local organic farmers are Monsanto's competition.* Monsanto et al. are seeking to destroy their competition through contamination. If an organic farmer's produce and/or seed stock is contaminated with GE genes, then they can no longer market the produce of the farm as organic, *and* the seeds belong to the patent holder. This is anti-competitive, anti-capitalist, monopolist behavior and the Oregon legislature should not collude with them.

The downsides are few, and exaggerated by the opponents of local control. It may be that a few farmers surrounded by organic farms will not be able to grow GE, when they otherwise would have liked to. What will likely end up happening, over the next ten years, is the development of agriculture regions in Oregon: Organic and GE, coexisting separately. *This will happen through the democratic participation of local people debating local issues at local government meetings. This is as it should be.*

The one size fits all model of agriculture management no longer works in a world in which agriculture practices interfere with each other. New technology demands that a more nuanced approach to agriculture management be encouraged. This is best done at the local level, with local accountability.

I ask that you vote in favor of HB 2469. Thank you for all that you do for Oregon and its farms.

Best Regards,

Angela Zehava