



March 16, 2017

House Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources

RE: HB 2469 – Repeal of GE Seed Preemption – **OPPOSED**

Chair Clem and Committee,

I am Marie Bowers, a fifth generation farmer, and I am **opposed to HB 2469**, the repeal of GE Seed Preemption.

My family has been farming in both Lane and Linn Counties for over 100 years. Our farm spans 37 miles as a crow flies from one end to the other, from Brownsville to Creswell. The Linn/Lane County line virtually splits the farm in half. If the world were ideal we would choose to have our farm in a close vicinity to our shop and office. However they quit making land a while back and farmland rarely comes up for sale or rent close by.

On our spread out farm we primarily farm grass seed, wheat & meadowfoam. However, we are always trying to find alternative crops that can grow in our soil types, climate, has a market and fits with our equipment and overall farming methods. Over the years we have grown flax seed, radish seed, turnip seed, forage peas and the last two seasons we have been part of the Canola trial. These limited but diverse rotational crops are vital to overall sustainability of our farm.

The current seed preemption statute ensures that the availability of alternative crops exists for my ENTIRE farm, not just part of it.

Currently Genetically Engineered crops are not part of our farm. We are not opposed to growing a GE crop but at this time there are **11 GE crops available commercially** some of those include sugar beets, corn, soybeans, canola, alfalfa, cotton, papaya and a few more. Many of these are not feasible options for us because they would not work with the soil or climate of our farm. However, if canola shows to be a viable rotational crop for us this year then at some point we may choose to grow GE Canola.

It is very shortsighted to allow a county or city to ban a crop based on the type of technology used to produce it. Local bans harm local farmers' and puts the county or city at an economic disadvantage compared to neighbors. It also prohibits any future crops that might be sustainable options to grow in the area. Crop bans immediately limit the future.



Farmers are already dealing with a plethora of regulations that tell them how to farm. If seed preemption was repealed this could open us up to hundreds of new regulations. Counties or even cities could start making laws on the crops we grow. Rules & regulations could potentially change every few miles. What would a patchwork of regulations mean for our seed transportation, seed cleaning facility, our land values, and Oregon agriculture's overall marketability?

Farmers take risks every day with Mother Nature, pests, markets and government. The current seed preemption statute helps to mitigate additional unnecessary risks. I urge you to **VOTE NO** on HB 2469 and do not repeal GE Seed Preemption.