

**Senate Committee on Environment and Natural Resources
Testimony From Siskiyou Seeds, LLC in Support of SB 1037
Hearing April 12, 2017**

Siskiyou Seeds is a certified Organic Seed Company in Josephine County in SW Oregon that specializes in open-pollinated and Heirloom vegetable, flower and herb seeds. We distribute widely throughout Oregon and nationwide through on-line sales. We employ 10 people in our seed house and on our production farm. We grow much of the seeds ourselves and source the rest from other Organic growers in Oregon, many of whom are in Josephine and Jackson County.

As we a certified Organic Farm with the Oregon Department of Agriculture, our products must be produced in accordance with the USDA's National Organic Program (NOP), which prohibits contamination, by transgenic GE pollen. Contamination of a seed crop with GE pollen is distinctly possible for Beets, Chard, Corn, some Mustards and can render the crop virtually worthless for sale as Organic. Our business model is based upon our certified Organic status and our clientele looks to Siskiyou Seeds to assure them that they are purchasing and planting seed free of GE contamination. We grow over 400 varieties of crops including 35 varieties of the aforementioned species that are at risk from GE contamination from de-regulated GE crops being grown in Oregon including Roundup Ready Sugar Beets, GE Canola & GE Corn).

The cost for testing for GE contamination can range between \$300-400, plus the cost of the seed sample (5 pounds for corn) and the time expense. Testing of the 35 varieties mentioned above would cost up to \$16,000 annually. This is unacceptable. The citizens of both Josephine and Jackson County overwhelmingly voted to ban the cultivation of GE crops in May of 2014, thus putting the economic interests of local farmers like me ahead of the economic interests of large multinational biotech corporations.

Once again, we are urging you to help safeguard small family farms through voting in support of SB 1037. Thank you.