



April 26, 2017

Testimony in Support of SB 677
House Committee on Economic Development and Trade

Chair Lininger, members of the Committee:

Friends of Family Farmers encourages your support for SB 677 to allow on-farm cideries in Oregon. Our membership is made up of farmers and food producers across the state, including many who engage in farm-direct sales and the marketing of ‘value-added’ items made from the products grown or produced on their farms. Farm direct and ‘value-added’ agriculture is an important contributor to Oregon’s economy, providing income for thousands of small and mid-sized farms across the state.

With strong and growing support from discerning consumers, farm-direct agriculture is of growing economic importance in the state: According to USDA’s 2012 Census of Agriculture, Oregon is now in the top ten states for total value in farm-direct sales (over \$44 million annually), and ranks sixth in the nation in the number of farms that sell farm-direct, with over 6,000 doing so.

SB 677 would add to this important sector by encouraging Oregon’s craft cider industry. This bill would allow on-farm production and sales of farm-produced hard cider, creating a consistent set of rules statewide for farmers with at least 15 acres of orchard who wish to produce and sell hard-cider. This legislation would extend to cider producers the same protections and opportunities already extended to Oregon wine growers who produce and sell wine directly to consumers on their property.

If passed, we believe this bill could have a number of positive impacts. This includes creating new economic opportunities for smaller farmers who grow apples or pears by allowing them to add value to their crops on the farm to meet growing consumer demand for craft cider products. As this industry is allowed to grow, it will encourage job creation and economic activity in various parts of rural Oregon. If this bill does not pass, farmers seeking to establish on-farm cideries would be required to spend significant time and resources navigating county-level conditional use processes before they could operate. Some may not succeed even after spending significant time and effort.

Because this bill is modeled after the same policies now extended to wine growers, we believe it is well crafted and a good fit for Oregon.

Ivan Maluski
Policy Director
249 Liberty St. NE, #212
Salem, OR 97301