



Associated Oregon Hazelnut Industries

Senator Michael Dembrow, Chair
Senate Environment & Natural Resources Committee
senr.exhibits@oregonlegislature.gov

RE: Opposition to SB 853

Chairman Dembrow:

The Associated Oregon Hazelnut Industries represents the 800 growers and processors of hazelnuts in Oregon. Oregon is home to 99.9% of the U.S. hazelnut industry and acreage has increased from 28,000 to over 80,000 in the last ten years. The industry is positioned to be one of the largest in Oregon when the newly planted trees reach full production. During the past five years the industry has contributed nearly 250 million dollars to the economy of Oregon annually.

While Oregon is the U.S. hazelnut industry, it represents only 3-5% of the world production. During the past ten years close to 60% of Oregon hazelnuts have gone into the export market. The reason Oregon hazelnuts are in demand throughout the world is largely because of their quality. With careful use of pesticides and additional care in processing, they have become the standard for the world. Although Chlorpyrifos residue has not been found in hazelnuts it does have established Minimum Residue Levels (MRLs) in many countries. If alternative pesticides were used, they may not have established MRLs in which case countries would have the ability to decline importation even though no residue was found.

However, economics is but one aspect of the importance of the industry to the state. Hazelnut trees produce 80 to 100 years. Thus many growers are multigenerational and all have to be long term thinkers. They have a high level of stewardship and sustainability built in to their individual practices. Integrated Pest Management (IPM) is a mainstay in their programs.

In the 1980s growers funded researchers at OSU who imported a wasp to control aphids thus reducing greatly the need for pesticides. This has become a classical biological control success story. More recently they have supported work on the use of another wasp to control Brown Marmorated Stink Bug, which is a growing problem for many crops as well as home owners in cities throughout the country.

Their use of pesticides is based on monitoring to determine the best timing to apply pesticides to achieve the effect they need without decreasing the populations of beneficial insects or applying more product than is absolutely necessary. Chlorpyrifos and neonicotinoid insecticides are important components of IPM programs. If pests do not reach a level worthy of control, growers will not use sprays. When the insect

pressure reaches a level that will impact the quality of the crop or the health of the trees, growers will control the population. The critical level has been determined by years of grower funded research at OSU. For specific information on this please see the updated Hazelnut Pest Management Guide for the Willamette Valley at <https://catalog.extension.oregonstate.edu/em8328>

Chlorpyrifos plays a very important role because it does affect a wide variety of pests and is used in rotation practices that manage insect resistance. The hazelnut industry continues to find ways to reduce the use of pesticides. They realize that a balance of pests and beneficial insects is very important to long term orchard health and viability. SB 853 has the potential to have legislators make pesticide use decisions on a product-by-product basis rather than professional work done by scientists and regulators within our state and federal agencies. Current pesticide use in hazelnuts is determined by research done by OSU.

The growers of hazelnuts in Oregon respectfully request your “no” vote on SB 853. This will enable them to methodically move forward in their integrated pest management programs for the good of the environment, the industry and the state of Oregon.

Sincerely,



Polly Owen, Research Director
Associated Oregon Hazelnut Industries

Associated Oregon Industries
21595 A Dolores Way NE - Aurora, OR 97002
Phone 503.678.6823 Fax 503.678.6825
hazelnut@oregonhazelnuts.org