




OREGON WHEAT GROWERS LEAGUE115 SE 8th Street  Pendleton, OR 97801  541.276.7330  www.owgl.org

**TO: Sen. Michael Dembrow, Chair, Committee on Environment & Natural Resources
Members of the Committee**

**FR: Clint Carlson
Wheat Farmer, Ione
Vice President, Oregon Wheat Growers League**

RE: Urge Your 'NO' Vote on SB 853

The word "tool" is a noun and defined as "an instrument (as a saw, file, knife, or wrench) used or worked by hand or machine to perform a task".

As citizens you use tools every day. You drive a car to the grocery store. You pay for your groceries with cash. You store them in a refrigerator.

As farmers we have tools also, wrenches, welders, pickup trucks, tractors, and chemicals.

The chemical part is what I'm here to talk about. You use chemicals in your everyday life. You use soap to clean your body, house and cars. Doctors prescribe antibiotics to heal you when you get sick. You use petro chemicals to fuel your car or other chemicals to power the battery in your electric car. These are tools we all use from our toolboxes every day.

Wheat growers use a class of crop protection chemicals called neonicotinoids. They have been developed to manage destructive insect pests. We use this as a seed treatment to deter wire worms and aphids from damaging our young wheat plants after planting the wheat seeds in the ground. The wire worm, without these products, will chew on the plant and either damage or kill it. This also leads to possible infection from soil borne pathogens entering the wound. The neonicotinoid treatment also protects the young plant from attack by aphids that carry the barley yellow dwarf virus.

Neonics are the only chemical that is labeled for wire worm control at this time, which means that without this product, my crop could be wiped out – devastating an entire years' worth of work and harvest. The chemical is applied to the seed and then placed in the soil. I think this is an important point; there will be no effect on pollinators because the seed is placed in the soil. Wheat is pollinated by the wind; no pollinators are involved in the wheat reproduction cycle.

It is my opinion that a "restricted use" label should not be applied to the neonicotinoids class of pesticides and I urge your NO vote on SB 853.