

April 26, 2019



PRODUCING EXCELLENCE SINCE 1919

Governor Kate Brown
President Peter Courtney
Senator Mark Hass
Senator Arnie Roblan
Oregon State Capitol
Salem OR, 97301

Speaker Tina Kotek
Representative Nancy Nathanson
Representative Barbara Smith

RE: Equal Treatment Under House Bill 3427 – Agricultural Organizations

We recently learned of the potential impact of HB3427 on our family-owned blueberry packing and marketing company from Eric Groves (Northwest Hazelnut Co.). We are very concerned by the information we learned and urge you to maintain equality between business entities by addressing inequalities before passage of HB 3427.

Our family is celebrating a century of farming at Gingerich Farms. We have watched as other family farm businesses have been sold, absorbed into investment groups, or taken over by outside groups that only seek the “family” title. Farming and agricultural processing are difficult with many pressures from weather dependent yields, international competition undercutting pricing, and volatile markets. Agricultural producers maintain a delicate balance with each other for the slivers of profit we operate on. HB 3427 will make it even harder for family owned companies to be competitive with businesses structured as cooperatives.

The Oregon legislature has a long history of supporting agriculture in the state and the family operations that are essential to the character and success of Oregon agriculture. We urge you to review Mr. Groves’ comments and make the appropriate changes to the final draft of HB 3427.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Tristan Gingerich
Operations Manager
Gingerich Farms Products, Inc.