

May 8, 2019

Dear Chair Holvey and Members of the Committee:

My name is Barbara Richard. I write to you from Ashland where I am an active advocate for traditional agricultural foods and crops. I'd like to have your support for **HB 2882**.

Farmers have no protection against genetically engineered (GE) contamination events in Oregon. The reality is that over the past decade, GE contamination events, and threats of contamination, have cost U.S. farmers **billions** of dollars—including Oregon farmers—in rejected sales, lost exports, and closed agricultural markets.

For example, GE glyphosate resistant creeping bentgrass was in open-air field trials in 2002 in Madras, Oregon and Parma, Idaho. It was developed by Scotts in conjunction with Monsanto (now Bayer) for golf courses. In 2003 a high wind event caused the pollen to escape the fields. This GE creeping bentgrass has since been found in Jefferson and Malheur counties. There have also been reports of this bentgrass hybridizing with wild relatives. Though efforts to locate and destroy this bentgrass have been made by Scotts, the situation remains that this GE plant continues to spread. In 2015 Scotts signed a 10-year agreement with the USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service to continue on a declining schedule to survey for the plants and eradicate where possible. Yet, the spread of the bentgrass has caused problems which have a financial impact on irrigation districts in the affected areas as well as farmers raising organic livestock. Do you think in time it could threaten Oregon's grass seed industry?

While I ultimately want to see patent holders and manufacturers held responsible for GE pollen drift contamination so farmers aren't pitted against farmers, I support legislation that calls for the regulation of GE crops in Oregon.

Please vote HB 2882 out of committee with a "do pass" recommendation. Thank you for the consideration and for your service.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara Richard
Ashland, OR