

My name is Jacqueline Duyck Jones and I am a 4th generation farmer in Washington County. My Dad (Larry Duyck) and I farm blackberries, blueberries, grass seed, clover seed, sugar beet seed and wheat. The specialty crops in Oregon tend to be the most labor intensive.

Duyck Family Farm LLC is a diversified farming operation. We have successfully sustained our ever-improving farm for over 110 years. Now, as a Father Daughter team, we employ, on average, 30-50 individuals ranging from high school and collegiate students to war Veterans to members of the Hispanic community.

We are fortunate for a core group of employees who come back year after year for training canes, pruning blueberries, spot spraying, hoeing and harvesting. We are starting to experience our employees bringing their children to start working with their parents on our crews as well.

To us at Duyck Family Farm, this is a HUGE compliment and is too often overlooked. This shows that we are fair, respectful, reliable and valued as employers. Like most employers, we work WITH our employees in the field, on the inspection line, etc. We have paid above minimum wage for YEARS. When we need help, we need help and pay a higher than minimum wage to have security in our staffing. As is, we pay a higher hourly rate for night shift, working on the berry picker.

HB 2358 would require every farm and ranch in Oregon to pay overtime to employees after 40 hours of work. Currently, agriculture is exempt from overtime pay under the federal Fair Labor Standards Act and in most other states because of the unique seasonal nature of agricultural production, affecting both the total period when agricultural activities can be pursued and the days within the "season" when work can be performed.

We have ONE month of the year where the bulk of our employees work more than 40 hours a week. They know the job, they know the pay, and they keep coming back for the work, the hours and the pay that we give.

As farmers, we are price takers, which means that we cannot simply increase the sale price of our crops to account for added labor costs. We will not be able to afford the added payroll costs proposed in HB 2358.

We do NOT want to limit the number of hours worked by my employees. How fair would that be? We want to employ our crew, they are the experts. Anytime there is a crew disruption, time is wasted and that is when accidents can happen!

We are concerned that this policy hasn't been well-vetted and will actually harm those it intends to help.

Please oppose HB 2358 this session. This bill would negatively impact not only family farmers and ranchers in Oregon, but also agricultural workers!