

I oppose Overtime pay for farm work. Our farm grows apples, pears and cherries in Parkdale Oregon in an industry that is very labor intensive, weather dependent and restricted to very tight time windows to get work done or crops are unmarketable. Yes, one day late can ruin a crop.

We operate on very tight profit margins where the only way we make anything at all is by trying to be more efficient, reducing costs and growing more pounds per acre.

On a recent visit by a produce buyer from a large supermarket chain to our farm, the main topic they wanted to discuss was how can we provide them the product at a lower price.

How can we sell it to them cheaper? They have extreme market power. They do not allow for any increase in the price they pay us if our costs go up. There is no way for farmers to adjust the price they receive when costs go up. Worker advocates were clearly wrong when they stated "things just adjust". This shows a clear lack of respect for farmers and the monopolistic marketplace. It also shows a clear ignorance of the basics of economics of agricultural products.

There is no evidence at all that farms can pay overtime wages without extreme negative consequences. why would the legislature just decide to increase an industry's costs without evidence that it can be paid?

Oregon is already the most expensive state in the US to farm in. Farm workers make the median wage or better of the counties they work in if they work full time. Many receive housing for free with utilities paid. This free benefit easily makes up for overtime not paid and more. This puts farmworker's wages well above the median wage of the counties they work in. Oregon farmers can not compete now with other states. Let's not make it worse. Let's not make it terminal for farmers. it will be .