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82nd LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

HOUSE INTERIM COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, LAND USE, NATURAL RESOURCES, AND WATER

State Capitol

900 Court St. NE, Rm. 347

Salem, OR 97301

503-986-1511

503-986-1542

October 02, 2024

Committee Site Visit to Learn about the Impacts of Eastern Filbert Blight

September 27, 2024, 10:00-noon

Local Hazelnut Farm, 7938 Crosby Road NE, Woodburn, OR 97071

The House Interim Committee on Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water met at 7938 Crosby Road NE, Woodburn, OR 97071 on Friday, September 27, 2024, from 10 to noon. In attendance were Co-Chair Helm, House District 27; Rep. Scharf, House District 23; and Rep. Boice, House District 1.

The Committee heard from farmers and hazelnut industry representatives about the history and recent resurgence of Eastern filbert blight (EFB) in Oregon and its impact on the state's hazelnut farmers. EFB is a fungal disease that has affected hazelnut orchards in Oregon and Washington since 1970.

Issues discussed by the committee included:

- legislative response to EFB in the 1980s;
- previous success developing a hazelnut tree that was resistant to the strain of EFB;
- importance of the hazelnut industry in Oregon;
- the EFB appearing now is likely a mutated version of what previously infected trees;
- available control tactics;
- need for resources to fund dedicated positions at Oregon State University to develop trees resistant to the current version of EFB;
- need for resources to provide infrastructure to farmers until a resistant version is developed; and
- hazelnut growers' ongoing support for research positions through Hazelnut Commission fees.



Jeff Newton, Oregon Hazelnut Commission Chair, and Dr. Nik Wiman, OSU extension specialist, brief the committee on EFB at a local Hazelnut farm.



Hazelnut branch showing symptoms of EFB, which include elongated, raised bumps that begin to form on infected twigs and branches.