

Submitter: Shavonne Sargent

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Natural Resources

Measure: SB643

Greetings! I am a forester who got a career start through the production of maple syrup at my high school in New Hampshire. Transplanted west, I now work with landowners who are interested diversifying their forest revenue through the production of Bigleaf maple products. I support the addition of Bigleaf Maple syrup as a product in the Farm Direct bill.

Syrup made from the sap of Bigleaf Maple is an emerging product in Oregon that has the potential to make a lasting positive economic impact on small farmers in the state and the region. Western Oregon has an abundance of Bigleaf Maple trees, and tapping them for sap is a sustainable use with little negative impact. In fact, tapping provides an economic incentive to conserve native maple trees in areas that do not interfere with conifer production.

Including Bigleaf Maple syrup in Farm Direct will greatly enhance the ability of farmers to produce maple syrup as crop and market it to consumers directly from their land. Syrup is a shelf-stable product with low food safety risks to consumers because of the high sugar content and low quantity of water. Maple syrup has long been produced and sold directly in the Eastern United States. As Bigleaf Maple syrup production skills improve, some producers will be able to move beyond Farm Direct and build larger processing facilities licensed by the state that can supply retail markets.

Please take this opportunity to support an amazing new crop in Oregon!

Thank you for your consideration,

Shavonne Sargent