

Submitter: Susan Nackoney

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Natural Resources

Measure: SB789

To: Senate Natural Resources Committee

From: Susan Nackoney, Gentle Rain Farm

Re: Support for SB 789

Chair Golden, Vice Chair Girod, and Members of the Senate Committee on Natural Resources,

My name is Susan Nackoney and I own and run a small, certified organic farm in Boring, Oregon. I am writing today in support of SB 789, which maintains current protections for the Willamette Valley's lucrative brassica vegetable seed industry.

A few politically connected farmers are pushing to grow rapeseed/canola in the Willamette protected zone. But we should not open Pandora's Box: once cross-contamination and pest spread happens, it cannot be reversed. The risk to our seed industry is just too great to gamble with. Once contamination happens, our seed cannot be sold on the global market, and we lose precious seed varieties that have been cultivated for generations to ensure food security.

We are at a pivot point with protecting the Willamette for this key industry, and for the biodiverse seed varieties that growers all over the world depend on. We must extend the protections indefinitely and protect what's good. There is simply too much to lose. Here, as with so many public policies, an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.

For these reasons, I strongly urge you to vote YES on SB 789 to ensure the Willamette Valley stays one of the vegetable seed capitals of the world, a very special place for growing high-value seeds, and an economic powerhouse for our state.

Sincerely, Susan Nackoney, Gentle Rain Farm, Boring, OR