

To the Oregon House Committee on Agriculture:

My name is Jamie Gray. I am a constituent from Portland area code 97213.

I am writing to urge you to support HB 4153 Relating to Farm Stores. Small farms like those on Sauvie Island (Multnomah Co./Columbia Co.) are both cornerstones of community connection to farming and important providers of fresh, local food.

The diversification of revenue streams is critical to keep our small family farms afloat. Permanent structures offering refrigeration and protection from the elements are an important piece of efficiently and cost effectively meeting customer demand for fresh produce. Farm stores further enable farmers to showcase and sell related local products. This diversification increases economic opportunity for other local producers like apiaries, orchards, and nurseries, strengthens community ties, and allows farmers to proactively prepare for variability in factors outside their control.

Leaving farm store decisions at the county level makes sense for a diverse state like Oregon. It allows counties to protect farmers in ways befitting the unique opportunities, constraints, and risks present in each locality.

For counties like this one, small farms are not just a source of food, but a bridge between cultures and economies. Foot traffic on farms builds connection to farmers, to farmland, and increases public interest and investment in the broader success of Oregon agriculture. I know I wouldn't be learning about difficulties facing small *and* large scale farmers or writing to you today if it wasn't for my family's experiences with these farms.

Please protect our farms and farmers by keeping farm store decisions local.

Sincerely,
Jamie Gray