

Submitter: Jasmine Lillich
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB4153

Co-Chairs Helm and Owens, Vice-Chair Finger McDonald, and Members of the House Committee on Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water:

My name is Jasmine Lillich, and I am submitting testimony on behalf of the Clatskanie Farmer Collective, a rural nonprofit organization based in Columbia County that has supported local farmers and food producers since 2015 through farmers markets, a year-round food hub, educational programming, and direct producer support.

We are writing in opposition to HB 4153 as currently drafted.

Farm stands are a vital and accessible entry point into Oregon's agricultural economy. They allow small, beginning, and diversified producers to sell food directly to their neighbors, build relationships, and generate early income without the capital, acreage, or scale required by larger operations. In rural communities like ours, farm stands are not a luxury or an agritourism amenity; they are a practical, community-scale food access point and a foundational piece of the local food system.

HB 4153 would replace existing farm stand definitions with new "farm store" standards that impose acreage and production thresholds many legitimate farms cannot meet. These thresholds would exclude small parcels, early-stage farms, and producers who are operating legally today. In effect, the bill would close or prohibit small farm stands while expanding privileges for larger landowners.

From our vantage point working directly with over 100 producers, this approach runs counter to Oregon's stated goals of supporting small farms, beginning farmers, and rural economic resilience. Many producers we serve farm on leased land, marginal land, or small acreages. Their viability depends on flexible, low-barrier direct-to-consumer sales, including modest farm stands. Acreage alone is not an accurate measure of agricultural legitimacy, productivity, or community benefit.

We are particularly concerned that this bill shifts the primary purpose of farm-related uses toward event hosting and agritourism, rather than food production and local sales. This risks favoring capital-intensive operations while sidelining the very producers who most need accessible market opportunities.

We agree that Oregon needs thoughtful policy around farm stands and on-farm

activities. However, solutions should expand participation, not narrow it. Any update to statute should:

Protect existing small farm stands that are operating legally today

Avoid acreage-based thresholds that disadvantage small and beginning farmers

Recognize the diversity of farm scales, business models, and land access realities across Oregon

HB 4153, as written, does not meet those goals. We urge the committee to oppose this bill or substantially amend it to ensure that Oregon's smallest farms are not excluded from direct market opportunities that are essential to their survival.

Thank you for your time and consideration, and for your commitment to Oregon's agricultural communities.

Sincerely,
Jasmine Lillich
Executive Director
Clatskanie Farmer Collective
Clatskanie, Oregon