

My name is Lise Monahan, of Fraga Farmstead Creamery- I am a dairy farmer in Washington County Oregon. I listened in to the hearings but was unable to connect for my testimony. Thank you for reading it now! (Please, please read it!).

We milk 60 head- a small family farm. We process our own milk in our Grade A dairy and sell the cheese regionally.

We employ local folks in meaningful jobs at decent pay. Our land is in a whole farm conservation plan through NRCS and we are actively improving our land for future generations of wild life and people.

We are a fixture at local farmers markets and provide our local community with nutritious food- even and especially during the pandemic!

We invite school kids, seniors groups , the general public to our farm where they can learn about Oregon's pasture based agriculture.

While listening to the testimony of others- environmentalist and dairy professionals I was struck by the parallel realities that were being portrayed.

Statements to the detrimental impact of dairies and their enormous amounts of effluent were on one side. On the other, statements of the exceptionalism of management and practices of the Oregon dairy industry.

Only on one thing everyone seemed to agree on : dairy farmers in Oregon are hurting and are themselves endangered.

The solutions proposed were just as oppositional- a moratorium to further study the impacts of CAFOs or a lifting of the moratorium to decrease the regulatory burden on struggling farmers.

What was missing in all of the statements though was acknowledgement that the consumers' views of the dairy industry have evolved and that at the end of the day all of the industry's troubles will only worsen if the consumer moves further away from acceptance of standard industry practices.

Consumers have spoken out about chickens.... They should not be in tiny cages and never see the light of day.

Now consumers are focusing on cows!

As farmers market vendors we have unique insights into what Oregonians want. We have weekly conversations with our customers. We get quizzed on our practices and we know that consumers are turning away from conventionally produced milk. Many of the worst practices- the culling of male calves for example are not yet known to the average consumer. We brace ourselves for the insights that consumers are gaining- the competition for us is not just mega dairies but all the alternative and quite palatable nondairy products that are flooding the market place.

Being at the market weekly gives us another insight. To those that say “low income people need low cost food”. I say “at a Portland farmers market up to half of our sales are in snap tokens. “. Low income people want access to good food like everyone else.

To know that dairy is in trouble you don't need to talk to dairy farmer- you just need to look at a supermarket cold case and marvel at all of the non-dairy products available these days in ALL supermarkets- not just Whole Foods!

The Oregon Cheese guild (we are members off it) did a large survey of consumer preferences. The number one reason (over 80% of respondents) consumers listed for choosing artisan products was a concern over animal welfare.

Tillamook is currently in court, having to defend itself against charges of misleading the consumer about their milk's origin and the quality of life that the average Tillamook dairy cow has. Tillamook claims the artisan cheese label but the majority of Tillamook's milk comes from Three Mile Canyon. Tillamook's troubles are not just the moratorium - they are being left behind as a business model consumers are rejecting.

Here is a fact that needs to be communicated to consumers : You cannot make cheese for \$4 a pound and treat the land, the people and the animals right. This hurts small dairies because it

creates a false price floor and it hurts all dairies because it creates a demand for alternatives.

In the last decade, Oregon has lost half of its small farmstead dairies like ours due to competition from mega dairies and price pressure. In the future the large dairies will lose customers to ever improving alternative dairy.

If we cannot assure the consumers that dairy is done right they will embrace the new generation of products under development- similar to cell based meats. None of these products have hit the market yet but they are coming. My guess is that when they do, they won't be made in Oregon.

Dairy is a great thing, humans figured this out thousands of years ago. Plants – photosynthesize, ruminants and people with the skill to turn milk into deliciousness.

Oregon is a great dairy state. We have the soil and climate for the best grass and Alfalfa. Oregon Artisan cheese wins prizes around the world!

Customers look at the lives of cows- cows that never put a hoof on a grass in their life, Cows that birth but never get to nurse a calf. And they turn away in disgust. And now it is easy to go dairy -- Coconut, cashew, almond, palm oil and all the other dairy free things..... they don't grow in Oregon!

Oregon has a unique opportunity right now to become a leader in animal agriculture. You as legislators have the opportunity to listen to your constituents and assure them that their concerns about animal welfare are beginning to be addressed with further research and, yes, a moratorium.

At this point the future for all dairy is bleak. The fact that pasture based responsible dairy is possible, carbon negative and feasible in such a place like Oregon is lost on consumers. The more the dairy industry digs in and seeks “efficiencies at scale” the more it hurts all of us. I sincerely hope that along with the moratorium, which I support, there will be research on ways to help the dairy industry climb out of this hole that they keep digging. I hope that my fellow dairy farmers in Oregon will be able to continue to do dairy, do it differently and regain the trust of the consumer. The great dairy industry in Oregon needs your help in many ways. The moratorium would be a place to start to find ways of how to help.

PS I would be happy to provide you with more information about consumer research that has been done- these facts need to be considered!