



## A&R SPADA FARMS LLC

P.O. Box 157 7251 St. Paul Hwy NE

St. Paul, Oregon 97137

P: 503-633-2941 F: 503-633-2939

[www.spadafarms.com](http://www.spadafarms.com)

My name is Kevin Spada, I am a fourth generation farmer and my family grows nursery stock, wheat, grass seed, hazelnuts, and more in Marion County. We employ around 100-120 employees. I want to share with you my concerns about the real impact of HB 4002, the ag overtime proposal, on both my farm and my employees. As a farmer, I am a price taker, which means I cannot simply increase the sale price of my crops to account for added labor costs. Consumers set our prices and will buy from other states or countries that sell at a cheaper price. I will have to absorb any added overhead. That's the economic reality I deal with every day, especially with the pandemic, forest fires, ice storms, and whatever else Mother Nature throws at us.

I will not be able to afford the added payroll costs proposed in HB 4002, as it will likely cost me well over a million dollars in new labor costs. To stay in business, I will be forced to limit the number of hours worked by my employees to 40 hours in a week to avoid the added expense of overtime pay. I do not want to do this, and my employees do not want me to do this, but that is the practical reality of this bill. Farmers and ranchers will have to mechanize operations, transition to less labor-intensive crops, or even move outside of Oregon to stay in business.

HB 4002 does not take into account that all a farmer does is at the mercy of Mother Nature- wind, rain, snow, ice, sun can either dramatically limit a work day or cause a great deal more of work in one day or the need to finish a task within a certain period of time. For example, harvesting grass seed, wheat, or clover seed absolutely cannot be done with any dampness.

Farmers have been clear about the consequences of this policy, but I'm also worried that farm employees will see their paychecks reduced or jobs cut if overtime pay is required after 40-hours. The unintended consequences of this bill include farm employees who are at risk of losing their jobs if downsizing, switching crops, or mechanizing are the only options available to a farm or ranch. If this bill passes, I will need to seriously downsize & move to less labor intensive crops to stay in business.

As a family business, we can't operate at a loss year-over-year. Mandating overtime after 40-hours demands wages that are not possible with the economics of agriculture and will result in reduced pay and opportunities for farm employees. Only seven states have adopted ag overtime policies, and most have crafted policies that ensure that local farms can remain viable and that employees' jobs and paychecks are protected. Several states have adopted policies to meet seasonal needs and others established higher overtime thresholds that help avoid some of the worst consequences.

Please oppose HB 4002 this session. This bill would negatively impact not only family farmers and ranchers in Oregon, but also agricultural workers! We care deeply about our employees and their families. We want to be able to continue to provide employment, support the community, and farm the land that has been part of the family for generations. For the reasons outlined above, I strongly implore that HB 4002 is opposed.

Sincerely,

Kevin Spada  
A & R Spada Farms, LLC