



March 5, 2023

Dear Chair Golden and Committee Members,

The proposed SB85 directed towards Oregon's family farms would hurt Oregon's agricultural production, Oregon's economy, and Oregon families.

According to Oregon's own State Board of Agriculture, Oregon's agricultural sector produces just over \$5 Billion in production, which is roughly 13% of the Oregon economy. Our environmental protections and ODA regulation and oversight is stronger than the surrounding states, and is stronger than the regulations at the Federal level. According to Oregon's Department of Agriculture, "Oregon agriculture directly and indirectly contributes 686,518 jobs, \$29.71 billion in wages, \$12.12 billion in taxes, and \$2.85 billion in exports to the state."

With over 104,000 Oregonians currently unemployed, grocery costs skyrocketing, and families struggling to make ends meet, limiting our ability to grow our own food and employ Oregonians on family owned farms is a recipe for disaster. I would understand the proposal of SB85 if Oregon did not have such strong agricultural oversight and cooperation between family owned farms and state agencies. But we do. There is no environmental disaster looming.

But what we do know is that if we limit our own food production, our food will have to come from somewhere else. And rest assured, it will come from a location without the environmental regulations and protections we take for granted here in Oregon. If we want to simply outsource our carbon footprint and greenhouse gasses to other states, this plan would make sense.

Oregon's agricultural sector has effectively used new technology to use less water, less resources, and is more environmentally friendly than ever before. This is turning Oregon agriculture greener year by year. If we limit our own food production and outsource our food supply, the Oregon legislature is turning their backs on our legacy of success.

What is more worrisome is that people currently engaged in agriculture in Oregon are retiring faster than younger people are coming in. The pool of farmers in Oregon is getting smaller, and young people wanting to farm in Oregon simply aren't. While some young Oregonians are getting into "boutique agriculture" with new and exciting specialty items, these simply can't feed Oregon families. With 12% of Oregonians at or below the poverty level, these families simply cannot afford to pay boutique prices. We need to focus on affordable foodstuffs.

No one is out to endanger the environment. But we do know that this proposed legislation will endanger the economy, and threatens all the advancements Oregon agriculture has made over the last few decades. Please say no to bad legislation....our Oregon families need you to.

Best,

Timothy Christopher
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Northwest Chicken Council

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