

OFFICE OF REPRESENTATIVE ANNA SCHARF

Canola in the Willamette Valley

Why SB 789 would perpetuate the unfair and unwarranted restriction of canola in the Willamette Valley.



What is Canola?



- Canola is a crop in the *Brassica* family related to mustard and cabbage. There are 5 species of *Brassica* grown in the Willamette Valley amounting to over 30 different crops.
- Canola was originally developed from rapeseed to produce an edible form of vegetable oil.
- Canola grown in the Willamette valley is primarily *Brassica Napus*, the same species as forage rape, rutabaga, and Siberian kale.



History of Canola in the Willamette Valley

- 1990-93: ODA adopts rules for pinning maps in Linn and Marion Counties for *brassica* crops.
- 2012: ODA adopts temporary rule allowing for canola to be grown in limited outer areas of the Willamette Valley.
- 2013: HB 2427 limits canola in the Willamette Valley to 500 acres annually for OSU research on *brassica* cross-pollination, pests, and disease.
- 2015: HB 3382 extends the 500-acre canola limit and changes the purpose from research to commercial.
- 2019: SB 885 extends the 500-acre limit with a sunset in 2023.
- 2023: SB 789, if passed, would extend the 500-acre limit indefinitely.

Fiction	Fact
<p>#1: Canola volunteers will spread from the field site and migrate to other fields leading to cross-pollination with neighboring <i>Brassica</i>.</p>	<p>#1: OSU's 2017 report showed that volunteer persistence for canola was no different from any other <i>Brassica</i> grown in the Willamette Valley like turnip and radish.</p>
<p>#2: Canola will bring harmful pests into the valley that will damage specialty seed <i>Brassica</i>.</p>	<p>#2: OSU found no pest issue that is unique to canola, nor more prevalent in other brassica crops.</p>
<p>#3: Canola is more susceptible to diseases such as black leg that will spread.</p>	<p>#3: ODA's current administrative rules for black leg classify Canola the same as all <i>Brassica</i> crops.</p>
<p>#4: ODA determines where the fields will be permitted using industry best practices and the 3-mile rule.</p>	<p>#4: ODA receives the applications and turns them over to WVSSA (A seed company membership organization) who then determines what fields may be permitted and which ones need permission from seed companies. Since the OSU study in 2017, specialty seed fields have been grown closer than the 3-mile isolation distance <i>every year</i>. Only 1 seed company has ever rejected canola fields closer than 3 miles.</p>
<p>#5: “One acre of canola will kill Oregon specialty seed acceptance in the global markets” (quote from Universal Seed in 2013) – The only way to protect the specialty seed industry is to legislate a limit on canola to 500 acres.</p>	<p>#5: None of the specialty seed companies in Oregon have gone out of business despite canola being grown in the valley consistently since HB2427 was passed in 2013. In fact, one of the largest specialty seed companies, Universal Seed, has expanded their facility and increased their investments.</p>

Canola can coexist with the specialty seed industry



Pictured above: canola and turnip growing side-by-side in the Willamette Valley (both members of the *Brassica* species)

Canola is very beneficial for grass seed and wheat farmers' crop rotations.

It is a commodity crop that allows farmers greater flexibility to maintain cash flow.

Additionally, Canola is a super food for bees; canola has lots of pollen and the perfect mix of amino acids, protein and fats for bees.



Pictured above: beehives between the canola and turnip fields

We ask that you oppose SB 789 and support the coexistence of Canola and related *Brassica* in the Willamette Valley in a responsible and research-driven manner.

Relevant Resources

Mallory-Smith et al. (2017) "Final Report – House Bill 2427", Oregon State University. Available at: [HB2427ReportCanola.pdf\(oregon.gov\)](#)

Oregon Department of Agriculture. (2018) "2018 Report to the Oregon Legislature – House Bill 3382". Available at: [CanolaHB3382Report.pdf\(oregon.gov\)](#)

