

I live in The Dalles. I shop at Sandoz Farm here in The Dalles and Treebird Farm store in Hood River, along with all the other farmers and producers that sell at the farmers markets. We also have Gorge Farmers Collective that offers something like a local farmers market year round for delivery. I am so proud of these small farmers and ranchers, they offer lamb, beef, chicken, all grown in healthy and sustainable ways, along with eggs, fish, cheese, milk, cured and processed meats.

I feel much more connected to my community and better about the quality of the food I am eating, and my grocery bill is comparable to when I did most of my shopping at chain grocery stores.

What I hope for our state is to move further in this direction, to be able to provide more opportunities for small farms and ranches to provide food for their own local communities.

I remember the first time I drove through a series of factory cow pastures in Arizona. It was so disgusting to smell and see these poor animals in endless dirt pens. I've seen videos of how chickens are treated. I am a meat eater, but I believe it is necessary for us to treat our food animals with care and respect. Not only for the fact that doing so produces healthier meat, but also because healthy and sustainable farm practices are better for the environment.

Factory farms are not necessary. It is possible to raise the animals we need for food on land that is healthy and fertile with a diversity of plants and a natural landscape, we just have to decide to do it. It would be amazing if Oregon could commit to becoming a leader in developing the resources to support small farmers and ranchers and help us move away from the factory model. Please support SB85.

Serena Smith

The Dalles