

Chair Helm, Vice Chairs Owens and Hartman, and members of the committee:

I am a farmer in rural Polk County, Oregon, near the town of Dallas. I grow olives for olive oil and other olive-derived value-added products. I also have plans to grow small acreage of specialty seed and specialty crops.

I am writing to you to express support on HB 4059-7. I strongly oppose HB 4059-8.

Specialty Brassica seed growing in the Willamette Valley is a vital part of our small farm ecosystem. We are so lucky to be able to produce seeds in our region that produce millions of pounds of food all over the world. It is our duty to protect the ability of our farmers to grow vegetable seeds, feeding their families through viable farm businesses, and the world through the food that these seeds produce.

I care about seed farming in the Willamette Valley Protected District because the Valley is a special place, one of the few valleys in the world where so many crops and seeds can be grown. Ever since 1811, when the first non-natives discovered the Willamette River and its valley and described it in their journals, ever since 1828 and the first attempts at farming in the French Prairie area, farmers realized how special this valley is.

I am grateful for the work of the committee, the named isolation districts and the limitation of GE canola in the WVPD. When you consider HB 4059, please listen to the guidance of specialty seed growers and support the strongest possible option for Oregon.

Sincerely,

Bogdan "Beau" Caceu

La Creole Orchards