

Submitter: Kathy Hadley

On Behalf Of: Hadley Family Farm

Committee: House Committee On Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water

Measure: HB4059

Chair Helm and members of the House Ag Committee,

I greatly appreciate the time and energy this committee has put into the canola/brassica topic for the last decade, and particularly this last year. Let's not leave the situation in limbo any longer. We have in front of us, with the -7 ammendments, a program which was almost entirely agreed upon by the workgroup this last fall, considering the pinning system and base isolation distances for brassicas, utilization of isolation agreements, etc. Everyone understands the value in an equitable and accessible system, which this bill accomplishes.

The hang up, which had no work group consensus, is the GE component of canola. (It is not to be ignored though, other brassicas have GE technology in the works, so the policy consideration here cannot be narrowly defined long term as an only-canola aspect). As a participant of this workgroup, I am incredibly frustrated that one topic could jeopardize the entirety of our work.

I do believe it is possible to thread the needle without putting terrible policy into statute, however, if we could simply eliminate the GE cap language from the -7s. How can I suggest this when that's been such a strong demand from organics and specialty seed industries? Because by leaving the 6 mile isolation for GE in place, plus the one-sided burden placed on a hopeful GE grower of securing all isolation agreements (if any other brassica grower says 'no', there is no coin flip, they are just out), the system is SELF-LIMITING.

A six mile circle encompasses 72,000 acres! To put that into perspective, if they didnt overlap, you could only fit 14 such circles into one 1 million acre Valley. And that's including the metro region, etc. The actual 500,000 acres of cropland becomes very small when you start trying to place 6 mile circles.

I would further suggest a 3-5 year review of the GE component, to look at the actual acres requested and permitted, accounts of gene flow issues, etc. I was told reviews or sunsets would only mean we'd be back fighting the issue again then, but reality is, we will be anyway because this topic, both in its entirety and the GE piece, is NOT going away.

The time sensitive aspect though, that necessitates action THIS session, is grass seed growers are in dire need of a viable broadleaf rotation crop to clean up fields.

As we get further and further from field burning, weeds are becoming more and more prevalent and harder to control, and I for one dont like the path of just using more and different chemicals to try to keep grass weeds out of grass fields.

PLEASE commit to reaching a workable solution on this bill. The isolation distances in the -7s would not only be a gold standard, but better described as a platinum standard world-wide for organic and specialty seed protection, and could be a workable Oregon solution. We just need the 'cap' language removed to make the bill less abrasive & concerning from a political standpoint.

Thank you.

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