

Submitter:	Gretchen Stolfo
On Behalf Of:	small scale farmers
Committee:	Senate Committee On Natural Resources and Wildfire
Measure, Appointment or Topic:	SB80

This is an issue that is important to me because I've worked on a family farm. I know what sustainable agriculture looks and feels like, and how it benefits economies, local communities and food culture nationally. For six years I made cheese at a goat farm in Dripping Springs, Texas named Pure Luck. At this farm of 66 milking goats, we pasteurized 400 gallons of milk a week and processed it into goat cheese, which we delivered weekly to 3 Whole Foods Markets, 3 Central Markets, restaurants and a co-op in Austin and San Antonio. These deliveries were anxiously awaited by the merchants and their clientele.

Goats are herding animals, which means they are best served living in a herd and grazing over land. These goats are still grazing over the farm's protected 100 acres of scrub oak, wild grasses and shrubs that are suited to their ruminant digestion. The goat manure and bedding from their shelters is put in a compost heap for a season, then applied to the 10 acres of herb and flower fields. The sale of these provides income that allows time for the does to rest from milking while gestating. Small scale farming enhances local economies by bringing food enthusiasts to visit and come to events, such as cheese making workshops, purchases at the farm stand to visit the farm and training apprenticeships for future goat farmers.

Interactions with health inspectors can lead to regional networking and knowledge sharing, which leads to best practices with fewer mishaps-facilitating the growth of more successful small scale farms using sustainable practices.

On a national level, cheese makers and dairy farmers gather at a national conference each year where cheeses are submitted for judging and hard working cheese makers and animal tenders attend workshops and get to share knowledge, tasting each others' products and being recognized for their cheeses for the qualities that they possess.

Food culture is a living custom, and it has so many facets. Our lives and health depend on it.

It is deeply alarming to me that since factory farms arrived in Oregon in 1989, 600 small scale farms have closed down. One of the reasons for these closures is the particulate air pollution that has been carried over from factory farms to small scale farms, causing cancers in the farmers who spend so much time outdoors.

Another reason is the appearance of nitrates in groundwater wells in the vicinity of factory farms causing cancer to the neighboring farmers who depend on these wells for their drinking water. They cannot afford to dig deeper wells, and bringing in bottled water is a burden they did not create for themselves. This is obviously not supporting a growth in the local economy or food culture.

The herding animals such as dairy cows are not allowed to have the ability to graze,

and the food they are fed is harmful to their ruminant digestion.

The manure and urine from factory farms, in excess of 4 billion tons a year is a concern for all Oregonians in this time of climate crisis. In farming, big is not better.