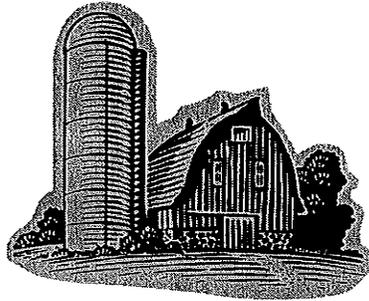


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LAND CONSERVATION & DEVELOPMENT
COMMISSION
DATE: 1-23-08
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SUBMITTED BY: _____



Portland Area Community Supported Agriculture Coalition

www.pacsac.org

January 18th, 2008

Land Conservation and Development Commission
635 Capitol Street, NE, Suite 150
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Commissioners:

The Portland Area Community Supported Agriculture Coalition (PACSAC) is a group of farmers growing fresh sustainable local food and selling it directly to families in the north Willamette Valley. The Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) model is a way for family farmers to produce a wide variety of high quality food in a sustainable way. CSA's foster responsible relationships between the grower, the consumer, the crops, and the land on which the food is grown.

Our coalition includes more than 40 local farms and hundreds of families who are CSA members. We share a desire to promote, support and strengthen a healthy regional food system. As you have heard from Oregon Dept. of Ag and the many diverse producers they represent, protection of valuable and productive agricultural land is necessary for the continued success of our vibrant agricultural economy. **In addition, by growing food now- and maintaining the land base necessary to grow food in the future - agriculture makes an invaluable contribution to the safety, security and livability of the region that no other industry does.**

To CSA farmers, the most important concept embodied in SB1011 is the potential long-term protection of agricultural land through the Rural Reserves program. We recognize that this new program does not replace the existing urban reserve or urban growth boundary expansion criteria, but rather adds an additional option. The current planning process has resulted in a rolling urban growth boundary that is detrimental to agriculture. The appeal of this new path is its ability to offer the longer-term protection to resource lands that all agricultural operations need to be successful. It is imperative that Rural Reserves program include those large tracts of the regions best farmland that lie adjacent to the Urban Growth Boundary. That is the land that needs to be protected by this program in order to enable the region to successfully address our growing concerns about regional food security.

We appreciate that the current planning process has slowed the urbanization of farmland, but every 5-7 years more rural land is in fact urbanized. Urbanization is permanent and once these world class resource lands are destroyed there is no going back. We will never be able to grow food on them as efficiently or productively - their agricultural potential will be lost forever. For that reason, we feel very strongly that the region's most productive resource lands, especially that farmland designated by Oregon Department of Ag as Foundation Lands, lands should not be included within the Urban Reserves without very serious consideration.

We urge the commission to continue to consult with the Oregon Department of Agriculture. We feel that both LCDC and ODA will benefit from the collaboration and hope it will provide a reasoned pathway to rural and urban reserves. The state, by continuing to allow non-farm development to encroach into traditional agricultural areas, is eroding the industry's ability operate and threatening regional food security. Every day, farmers face increased transportation costs, rising labor costs and higher energy bills. However, these threats pale in comparison to the long-term disruption and displacement of farming that occurs when uncontrolled development is allowed on farmland. **We are hopeful that SB 1011 will offer the long-term protection to local agricultural lands so crucial to the agricultural industry and to regional food security.**

Finally, we would like to applaud the commission for clarifying and expanding the rule to include a coordinated citizen involvement and broad public notice throughout the process. Oregonians are passionate about fair and open public process especially as it relates to land use planning. We believe that more citizen involvement in the new SB1011 process will ultimately create a better plan that supports our vibrant agricultural economy and enhances regional food security.

Sincerely,

Mike Paine

Gaining Ground Farm
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