

Oregon Board of Agriculture
Chair Boyer
635 Capitol St. NE Salem, OR 97301

Dear Chair Boyer and members of the board:

I support the adoption of Resolution 310: Siting of agri-tourism, entertainment activities and associated activities on agricultural lands.

My farm consists of 2348 acres of land in Washington County –this land is a mix of owned land and land leased from 25 farmland owners. We farm crimson clover seed, red clover seed, wheat, grass seed (proprietary turf, perennial rye grass, tall fescue), and hazelnuts. I have served on county work groups related to the topic of agri-tourism.

Throughout my career farming, I have experienced numerous attempts by well-meaning people to curb my ability to farm (and farming, by the way, is my full-time occupation). For example, while combining a field of crimson clover, I was approached by a gentleman hosting an event at home adjacent to the field; he asked if I would delay harvest until his event was over. I farm another field that now abuts a subdivision. I had to meet with the homeowner's association to address complaints about standard, acceptable, and legal farm practices like harvesting, spraying, and tilling.

Jobs like planting, spraying, tiling, and harvesting (a.k.a. farming) are unlike other jobs – jobs that can be precisely scheduled on a calendar months or weeks in advance. I operate based on the weather. That is why I cannot be there today. This break in the rain is my chance to spray the fields – the weather will not let me call in sick.

Each time a non-farm activity is introduced on onto farmland, a burden is placed on the existing farmers. No one compensates me for the time spent with neighbors upset or irritated about farm practices. Incompatibility between farming and non-farm activity costs farmers time, money, and adds stress and a new level of logistics to farming.

I also want to mention the different level of public safety and first responder capabilities in my region and in many other rural regions. Our public services reflect our agricultural community, not a city. We predominately rely on county sheriffs and volunteer fire fighters to serve our community. We don't have city-level response timing when fires break out or a crime is reported. That means that injuries associated with car crashes in rural areas wait longer for an ambulance, an out-of-control bonfire can destroy a forest or a whole crop before volunteer firefighters can respond, and trespassing or illegal parking violations may not be investigated.

If we keep agriculture as the primary activity on our resource land then we reduce the chance of future farmers dealing with the issues I've experienced when non-farm uses are established near my farm. We also keep our roads and communities safer.

I hope you accept and agree with my support of Resolution 310: Siting of agri-tourism, entertainment activities and associated activities on agricultural lands.

Sincerely,

Dave Vanasche
Vanasche Farm LLC