

WHAT IS THE LOCAL FOOD SYSTEM ORDINANCE OF LANE COUNTY?



The Lane County Local Food System Ordinance is a law, drafted by residents of Lane County. A citizen's petitioning campaign, lead by Support Local Food Rights, is seeking to have this measure go to a vote of the people on the May 2014 ballot. This local food system ordinance would create a healthy locally controlled food system in Lane County by:

- recognizing residents' right to a local food system that assures residents' ability to grow and produce food while and, at the same, not harming nature;
- prohibiting genetically modified crops in Lane County;

- placing the rights of the community over corporate agribusiness powers and privileges, which agribusiness routinely uses to override local efforts aimed at establishing economic and environmental health and autonomy.

Why is a Local Food System Ordinance Necessary?

The Lane County food system is vibrant and keeping it so is vital to our community. It is a pillar of our local economy, fundamental to our health and well-being and inextricably linked to sustaining the environment in which we live.

Corporate agricultural practices are damaging to the people of Lane County and to nature. The use of genetically modified seeds and crops as well as their accompanying pesticides are real threats to protecting a healthy, viable local food system in Lane County. The sad reality is that harmful agricultural practices are generally protected by laws adopted at the state and federal levels, and corporate “rights” routinely override the rights of Lane County residents and the self-determination of farmers.

The Lane County Local Food System Ordinance seeks to use the powers of local lawmaking to put an end to abusive corporate agribusiness’ agricultural practices in the County, while supporting locally controlled food systems.

The Lane County Local Food System Ordinance would further a healthy, sustainable, and democratic Lane County by securing rights for people, our

communities, and the natural environment—rights that corporations, and government must respect. If they don't, the ordinance provides/gives the people of Lane the legal muscle to make sure they do so.

How does this Ordinance achieve these goals?

By lawfully using our initiative system to enact this ordinance, the people as the foundational body of government of this local jurisdiction will be exercising their constitutional rights to assure the future health and integrity of our local food system.

“It’s unfolding in front of our eyes, and it’s blatantly clear that we are at the mercy of agribusiness corporations,” says Chief Petitioner Lynn Bowers, Support Local Food Rights. “It is not only threatening to our health, the environment, and our local economy, but this corporate-dominated state we live in completely undermines our right to local self-government on issues as basic as the food we eat. It’s up to us – residents, farmers, food advocates – to say no more to business as usual, and yes to claiming our right to protect our local farm and food system.”

The Local Food System Ordinance of Lane County establishes a right to a local food system and seed heritage, as well as rights of nature to support healthy agriculture in Lane County. It also prohibits harmful practices – like the planting of GMO’s – that would violate those rights.

Though corporate control of agriculture is not a new phenomenon, recent events including the GMO wheat incident in eastern Oregon, the Oregon Department of Agriculture's decision to expand canola production in the Willamette Valley at the expense of the local specialty seed industry, and the introduction of Oregon Senate Bill 633 – the aim of which is to remove any local control over seed – have made it clear that the structure of how we protect the local farm and food system must be changed.

Source: <http://readthedirt.org/what-is-the-local-food-system-ordinance-of-lane-county>