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May 30, 2013

The Honorable Tom Vilsack
Secretary, U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., S.W.
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Secretary Vilsack

It is with profound alarm that I and many Oregonians learned that genetically engineered (GE) wheat was recently discovered in Oregon by an Oregon farmer. Of the wheat grown in Oregon, 90-percent is exported abroad, mainly to Asia. This represents as much as \$500 million in Oregon exports and much of it could be put into jeopardy by this discovery.

As you know, this product appears to have been developed by Monsanto and was approved for limited field testing in Oregon more than a dozen years ago. Although the Food and Drug Administration determined that this particular GE wheat variety posed no health risk, it has not been approved for sale or commercial production in the United States. Consumers in Oregon and around the world have raised deep concerns about GE foods broadly and, therefore, it is critically important that the U.S. government help Oregon wheat growers provide the assurance that buyers of Oregon wheat may need to demonstrate that Oregon wheat that is sold in foreign and domestic markets does not come from GE seeds.

While I am pleased that the U.S. Department of Agriculture quickly launched an investigation into the GE wheat that was discovered by an Oregon farmer and confirmed by Oregon State University, I ask that you coordinate closely with the office of the U.S. Trade Representative, the U.S. Department of State, and the U.S. Department of Commerce in order to provide assurance and certainty to global wheat markets that Oregon growers are not producing or selling GE wheat, and to address any concerns or misinformation that may arise. The discovery of non-harvested, GE wheat should not be used by America's trading partners to erect spurious, protectionist trade barriers or procurement practices in the absence of scientific evidence indicating that Oregon exports contain this strain of wheat.

Sincerely,



Ron Wyden
United States Senator

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