

Richard Wander President

Ohio Produce Growers & Marketers Association

Hearing on Proposed Leafy Greens Marketing Agreement

October 6, 2009

My name is Richard Wander and I am a partner at Lynd Fruit Farm in central Ohio. I thank you for taking the time to listen to the concerns and needs of growers in our region. While I am not a leafy greens grower I am president of the Ohio Produce Growers & Marketers Association and have grave concerns of the effects of a national marketing order on the many growers throughout our state. If put in place a national agreement would have an effect on all produce growers and not just on leafy green growers.

The California Leafy Greens Marketing Agreement worked because it was designed for the local conditions of Western Growers. The whole agreement is invalidated when its specifics are attempted to be applied to the whole United States. Growers in each state must come together to design food safety plans that work for each region. I question how we are supposed to comment on this agreement when not all the specifics of the plan have been developed. The proposal for developing a National Leafy Greens Agreement calls for very limited grower involvement. The Ohio Produce Growers & Marketers Association cannot endorse this national effort. I believe that for any food safety standards to work we need involvement with all growers and not just a selected few.

We as produce growers in the state of Ohio are very concerned about delivering a safe and reliable product to our customers. To do this we must have food safety plans that are based on science and fit each of our individual operations. Over regulation and unnecessary requirements only take away our time and energies from duties necessary to make our products reliable. Thank you for your time.

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