

We are opposed to SB 218—revise seed contract law—liability for genetically engineered wheat because: 1) it stifles research here in Montana and nationally in crops we grow Montana; 2) it will put the brakes on rural economic opportunities in Montana; 3) the legislation is premature—earliest possible introduction of biotech wheat is six years in the future; 4) damage for loss of markets is a possible danger now but world opinion is gradually moving toward acceptance—especially with our most important trading partners in Pacific Rim, and 5) we question that the legislation is even legal. Please vote no on SB 218.

Print Name	Town	Signature
Dana Ness	Rudyard	Dana Ness
Bill O'Haire	Vaughn	Bill O'Haire
Calvin Hawkins	Fort Benton MT.	Calvin Hawkins
James LaBuda	Big Sandy mt.	James LaBuda
Michael Olson	Cut Bank, MT	Michael Olson
Bruce Penay	Richey, MT	Bruce Penay
Vern Staabel	Fort Benton, MT	Vern Staabel
Rick Olson	Harlowton MT.	Rick Olson
Monte Faugue	Cut Bank	Monte Faugue
Jerry Doornik	Glasgow mt	Jerry Doornik
Stanley Postal	Stanford Mt.	Stanley Postal
Steve Ebert	Winifred, mt	Steve Ebert
Craig Essebagger	Sun River MT	Craig Essebagger
Thomas Gatzmeier	Great Falls	Thomas Gatzmeier
C J Pave	Great Falls MT	C J Pave
Edlan Holliday	Billings, mt	Edlan Holliday
Brent A. Nelson	Billings, MT.	Brent A. Nelson
Phil Hastings	Hardin, MT	Phil Hastings
Mark Betts	Hardin, MT	Mark Betts
Dean Newman	Power mt	Dean Newman
Mark Lehner	Power Mt	Mark Lehner
Bruce Brantlett	Fort Benton	Bruce Brantlett
Richard Sawyer	Big mt	Richard Sawyer
Tom Doherty	Dutton	Tom Doherty
Colby Hershberger	Denton	Colby Hershberger
Robert Beck	Denton	Robert Beck
Henry Burkhardt	Hamilton	Henry Burkhardt
KEITH FURKAYW	MILES CITY	Keith Furkayw
Tim Harlow	Shelby MT	Tim Harlow
Merlin Johnson	Ch. rock	Merlin Johnson
Doug Brown	Fairfield MT	Doug Brown
Ron Muzzana	Great Falls	Ron Muzzana
Todd Erickson	Sidney	Todd Erickson
Jeremy Klempel	Sidney	Jeremy Klempel
Curtis Hershberger	Denton, MT	Curtis Hershberger

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Print Name	Town	Signature
DALE DAHL	Billings MT	Dale Dahl
Dan Miles	Livingston, MT	Dan Miles
Bryan Arman	Butte MT	Bryan Arman
Leonard Keebler	Great Falls MT	Leonard Keebler
Thomas L LEADS	Great Falls MT	Thomas L Leads
Dave A Carlson	Choteau MT	Dave A Carlson
ROBERT A. HODGKINS	Choteau, MT	Robert A Hodgkins
Jim CHRISTIANSON	FAYT FELD MT	Jim Christianson
Jack Judisch	Conrad MT	Jack Judisch
Dustin Krachin	Dutton MT	Dustin Krachin
Chris Ator	Medicine Lake MT	Chris Ator
Clark Schumacher	Belling MT	Clark Schumacher
FRANK SCHUMACHER	GREAT FALLS	Frank Schumacher
C.J. Dane	Great Falls	C.J. Dane
MIKE KARNIS	GT FALLS	Mike Karnis
Robert Ullom	BILLINGS, MT.	Robert Ullom
Barbara Herda	Billings MT	Barbara Herda
Jeff Brennan	Bozeman, MT	Jeff Brennan
Lyle Harrison	Budyard MT	Lyle Harrison
DAVID SAGMILLER	ROMAN MT	David Sagmiller
Thor Lehtsgaard	Chinook MT	Thor Lehtsgaard
Bill O'Haire	Vaughn MT	Bill O'Haire
Barry Marsh	Billings, MT.	Barry Marsh
Bill Wilson	Billings Montana	Bill Wilson
Craig Cheatham	Ryegate MT	Craig Cheatham
PAUL OXSON	CONRAD MT	Paul Oxson
Andrew Fisher	Great Falls	Andrew Fisher
MARK COLE	SHELBY	Mark Cole
KEVIN JOHNSON	CONRAD MT	Kevin Johnson
Jeff Farkell	BRADY, MT	Jeff Farkell
Alicen Rice	Haure, MT	Alicen Rice
Ryan Lammers	Haure MT	Ryan Lammers
GARETH REDGRAVE	CHOTEAU, MT	Gareth Redgrave
Harvey Hollandsmith	Brady, MT.	Harvey Hollandsmith
JARREN Tater Mason	Friend MT	Jarren Tater Mason

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Print Name	Town	Signature
Scott Hanson	CONRAD MT.	Scott Hanson
Bob Redd	Conrad, MT	Bob Redd
Scot Sassions	Choteau, MT	Scot Sassions
Terry Sangwin	Denton mt.	Terry Sangwin
Edwin Schett	Stimped, MT.	Edwin Schett
Steve McDonnell	Three Forks, MT	Steve McDonnell
Mike A Heid	White Sulphur Springs, MT	Mike A Heid
L. Frances Heys	Buzeman MT	L. Frances Heys
FORREST L. JOHNSON	ROMAN MT	Forrest L. Johnson
Tom Benson	Roman, MT	Tom Benson
Shawn Morigan	Roman, MT	Shawn Morigan
CHAS REED	GREAT FALLS	Chas Reed
Lance Wilson	Conrad, MT	Lance Wilson
JOOT KNAPTON	GERALDINE MT	Joot Knaption
Donald Heck	Belgrade, MT	Donald Heck
Dean Bongardner	Fort Benton MT	Dean G. Bongardner
Cedric Johnson	DENTON MT	Cedric Johnson
Mary E. May	ft. Benton, MT	Mary E. May
Daniel L. Johnson	Shepherd, MT	Daniel L. Johnson
Eric Gunderson	Fairfield, MT	Eric Gunderson
RUSSEL DAVIS	Power, mt	Russel Davis
Mike L. Lang	Malta, MT	Mike L. Lang
NORM NELSON	Stebby, MT	Norm Nelson
DICK SCHOCK	Valley, MT	Dick Schock
Greg B. Taylor	Stebby, mt	Greg B. Taylor
Alvin Schiller	Glendon	Alvin Schiller
WAYNE JACKSON	DAYTON mt.	Wayne M. Jackson
PETE BARBIE	Cat Bank MT	Pete Barbie
TERRY WILLARD	PLENTYWOOD MT	Terry Willard
DAVID GIERER	Bullhead mt	David Gierer
Theodore A. Kiere	Lewistown mt	Theodore A. Kiere
DALE R. BERG	Lewistown, mt.	Dale R. Berg
Jim Wilson	Choteau mt	Jim Wilson
PAUL L. SEILSTAD	WINIFRED MT	Paul L. Seilstad
John A. Lamons	Buzeman MT	John A. Lamons



February 4, 2005

## Testimony in support of SB 218

Mr. Chairman, Members of the Committee:

My name is Eric Schiedermayer. I represent the Montana Catholic Conference, the voice for Montana's two Roman Catholic bishops in the state legislature, who in turn are the spiritual leaders of over 140,000 Montanans. I rise in support of this bill.

Montana's rural communities form the heart and soul of the state. From the pioneers of yesteryear to the New Yorker who moved to Missoula last week, we have come here in large part attracted by the beauty of God's creation. We come in search of a place away from the "rat race," where we and our children can live perhaps a little more simply, closer to the earth, in an environment where virtue, integrity and hard work are still highly prized.

Montanans are also a highly independent lot. We like the freedom to make our own decisions and to chart our own destinies.

Today, as always, our farmers must make some hard decisions – decisions which have serious, far-reaching consequences for them and their families. One of those decisions is about whether to plant genetically modified wheat. Do they try to take advantage of something that might increase their yield – something that might bring them a little more profit with which to care for their families and build their communities? Or do they continue to cultivate the markets they've been working in – producing the highest quality natural wheat for discriminating buyers throughout the world?

This bill is about that decision.

One principle which underlies Catholic social teaching is that of subsidiarity. Where appropriate, decisions and responsibilities should be left to those closest to the issue, rather than making sweeping policy decisions at a higher level. Montanans understand this principle intuitively. This bill follows that principle. Farmers are not told that they cannot plant, grow, and market genetically modified wheat. Scientists are not told that they cannot imagine, create and sell such wheat.

Neither however, is it right for our farmers to be forced by circumstances to follow a course of action that is against their will, nor to have their hard work undermined by the actions of another. If another farmer down the road chooses to plant genetically modified wheat, it is not right that our farmer's crop should be contaminated by windblown pollen which results in his inability to sell it to his carefully-cultivated markets – markets which he has spent many years and many dollars developing.

Ultimately, this bill is about responsibility and accountability. These are things we Montanans understand and respect. These are things that we parents strive to cultivate in our children. And these are things that the Catholic Church recognizes as essential in the pursuit of the common good.

Scientists who develop and market something as innovative as a transgenic organism should rightfully share in the responsibility for their invention. If a farmer follows the scientists' directions in planting a crop of genetically modified wheat and something goes "awry" (pardon the pun), the burden of responsibility cannot rightfully be placed completely on the farmer. The scientists cannot duck their share of that responsibility.

Conversely, if wind drift causes the contamination of a farmer's field, and some of the newly developed genetic material ends up in his crops, it's ludicrous to allow the scientists to claim that the affected farmer is infringing upon their patent.

Montanans understand personal responsibility and accountability. Perhaps this bill will help some others to understand those same principles.

This bill is good for Montana's farmers. It's good for Montana.

Eric Schiedermayer  
Executive Director, Montana Catholic Conference