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My family has grown hops in the Yakima Valley for over 40 years. I am a 3rd generation grower and yes, I may be French. To address Dr. Hinman's inevitable question yes we would be considered a small operation in the current year. That covers both hops and other crops. A short time ago, I would not have been able to say this. Just a couple of years ago, we would not have qualified as a small business. We have reduced our acres substantially during the last couple of years. This, on the surface, seems to be the reasonable approach to take when there is excess surplus on the market. A very short time ago, my family grew about 300 acres of hops. This year we grew about 100 acres. Yes, we have been growing super alpha varieties since 1994. We were fortunate to be associated with a merchant that gave us access to the variety earlier than some in the industry. At the time this seemed to be advantageous. Looking back I now realize that the efficiencies gained by this new technology were beneficial. The problem is, these efficiencies were not captured by our farm. I have thought about this as the years have gone by. My family has gained no long term benefit from this. I would like to think that the merchant received the benefit, but that merchant is no longer in business. This new technology must not have been very beneficial to them either. I thought that possibly consumers received some benefit from this technology, but the cost of beer has seen no decrease during this time. I am not sure who we gave the benefits to.

Our reduction of acres has not gone unnoticed. In fact, as we reduced acres, others with a different farming strategy have increased acres. This I don't mind too much, other than the fact that some of the same growers that have been complaining about the long stretch

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of low prices due to oversupply are some of the very people that are expanding their own farms. Yes, I am sure they feel more efficient when they do this. I am sure of this because I have seen how the efficiency of our farm has decreased as we have reduced acres.

We have removed trellis from some of our acreage. I don't suppose it will likely go back in any time soon.

I do support a marketing order similar to what has been proposed. I do agree with testimony of those that have said :

- a) The proposed order will not be an instant cure-all
- b) It will allow for orderly expansion when needed

I have had discussions with many growers during the past couple of years. I do believe there is a general consensus among growers that over reaction to "perceived demand" by many individuals may be the greatest downfall of our small industry.

Much testimony has been presented regarding our collective strengths as American growers. Let's all take advantage of this collectively.

I sincerely thank everyone involved for all of the effort that has been put into this nearly overwhelming chore.