

The Politics of Small Farm Policy in Oregon

by

Terence M. Merritt

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APPROVED:

Nancy Rosenberger, representing Anthropology

Mark Edwards, representing Sociology

Brent Steel, representing Political Science

Terence Merritt, Author

ABSTRACT

During the 2011 Oregon Legislative session, seven bills were debated that addressed policy affecting small farms. This paper seeks to understand the environment surrounding these bills: what is the political structure for determining small farm policy? To answer this question seven policymakers were interviewed and two legislative hearings were observed. The policymakers included legislative, governmental, and non-governmental officials. Three potential models were explored from the literature. First, that policy is determined by competing coalitions of policy specialists. Second, that an iron triangle of legislators, agency officials, and interest groups dominate the policy environment. Third, the policy structure is in transition towards a more open system. The models are assessed and compared using evidence that emerges from the interviews and observations of the process. The research finds evidence supporting two models and the conclusion is that the structure of small farm policy in Oregon is in transition. Based on the research the author recommends that policymakers design a long-term agricultural vision and recognize the importance of agriculture to rural communities, and calls on Oregon State University to become more involved in farm policy discussions.

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INTRODUCTION

Oregon is known as a place that supports local foods in restaurants and at farmers markets. Expressions like “Locally-Grown” or “Farm Fresh” are scrawled across menus, market booths, and storefronts. They give consumers an image of their food being grown or raised on idyllic farm by a happy farmer. What if some of the farmers are not happy? What will happen if they attempt to change policies that affect them? This paper uses a number of proposed changes to Oregon’s small farm policies as a lens for exploring the underlying structure of the farm policy process.

Research Question

Increased activism on farming led to a number of bills being proposed in the 2011 Legislative session concerning small farms. This paper is trying to answer the question: what is the political structure around small farm policy in Oregon?

Background

In September 2009, my Communities and Natural Resources class gathered in a field in Wallowa County, Oregon to talk to a rancher. She asked what our academic interests were; most students studied natural resources, forestry, or economics. I was the only public policy student and I sheepishly mentioned this, not expecting much interest from her. She listed a series of problems she felt could be addressed with policy changes. It was difficult for her to transport her cattle, to find a facility to slaughter her cattle, and to sell her meat. I was surprised these problems existed in Oregon. I expected Oregon would promote this type of business of providing grass-fed beef to consumers. I thought that someone ought to organize farmers and ranchers like this one to engage the political process.

A semester later, I attended a lecture in the Anthropology Department with a provoking title, “Reclaiming Agriculture Policy for Family Farmers in Oregon” given by Colin Anderson (Anderson 2010).

Anderson described the work of a non-profit group, Friends of Family Farmers (FFF). FFF helps farmers and ranchers organize to change the barriers restricting their businesses. FFF was drafting a series of policy recommendations called the Agriculture Reclamation Act (ARA), and hoped the bill would pass in the next legislative session.

Over the course of two years, FFF staff members held community meetings in farming areas around the state, visiting 17 places by the completion of the process in 2010. The meetings were “to establish a plan of action to ensure the survival of socially responsible farmers in our state and to elect farmer delegates to represent their respective communities in the drafting of the Agricultural Reclamation Act” (Friends of Family Farmers 2010). The number and diverse locations of the meetings were meant to ensure participation and input from farmers in the process. On February 28, 2010, the representatives from all the meetings met on the campus of Oregon State University to draft the ARA. The vision of the ARA is to ensure farm viability, establish a supportive relationship with the Oregon Department of Agriculture, and advance a regional food system (Anderson 2010).

Small Farm Policies in 2011 Oregon Legislative Session

Seven bills were proposed in the Oregon Legislative Session for 2011 that concerned small farms. House Bill 2222 was developed by Friends of Family Farmers out of their Agriculture Reclamation Act. The bill addresses four things: regulation of poultry processors with fewer than 1,000 birds; requiring two seats on the Board of Agriculture be for farmers who market products locally; expanding the number of cows and goats that a farmer can use to produce raw milk; and reducing the time required to obtain farmland tax deferment. With the exception of raw milk, each of these issues was addressed in another bill.

Asking informants about this bill allowed them to discuss their position on each of these issues. House Bill 2336 clarified regulations for certain foods sold at farmers markets and other direct sales. Table 1 shows the seven bills relating to small farms considered by the legislature in the 2010-2011 session.

Table 1. Small Farm Policy Bills (Data as of 8/21/11). Source: Oregonian 2011.

Bills	Description	Passed House	Passed Senate	Signed By Governor
HB 2222	Multiple sections	No	No	No
HB 2336	Direct farm product regulation	Yes	Yes	Yes
HB 2872	1,000 birds or less exemption	Yes	Yes	Yes
HB 2947	Standards for honey	Yes	Yes	Yes
HB 3626	Farmland assessment	No	No	No
HB 3631	Ensures direct farm marketers on board of agriculture	No	No	No
SB 960	Allowing agri-tourism on exclusive farm use land	Yes	Yes	Yes

Of the seven bills examined, the Governor has signed only two into law. While this paper does not address the policy implications of these bills, the table shows activity in the policy arena around small farms. Interviewing policy specialists about these bills allows an investigation of the underlying policy process. The interview questionnaire asked about two bills in particular House Bill 2222 and House Bill 2336 because they encompass most of issues addressed in other bills.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review summarizes why small farms are an important topic, cautions against agrarianism, and outlines the theoretical basis for the three hypotheses.

Importance of Small Farms

Numerous authors have criticized the problems facing small farmers as systematic. W. Berry (1986), in the preface of the second edition of *The Unsettling of Agriculture*, bemoaned that the problems he first observed ten years prior had gotten worse, “We are closer every day to the final destruction of private ownership not only of small family farms, but of small useable properties of all kinds. Every problem I

dealt with in this book, in fact, has grown worse since the book was written” (viii). Ikerd (2008) agrees that the current agriculture system ignores small farms, but points out that most farms are small farms and small farms can still be successful (85, 178). Ikerd opposes the language used by W. Berry writing, “the odds of success for any individual farmer could be considerably enhanced if current misperceptions concerning the imminent demise of small farms were replaced with the new realities of small farm opportunities” (Ikerd 2008, 178). Both W. Berry and Ikerd advance the opinion that support for small farms improves rural communities.

Goldschmidt (1978) shows that areas with small-scale agriculture have stronger rural communities. Comparing two California communities of similar economy and geography, Goldschmidt found that the community with large-scale agriculture had weaker social structures and concluded that large-scale industrialization was the causal reason. Based on Goldschmidt’s research, policies that encourage small farms would benefit rural communities. Support for small farms is sometimes seen as stemming from an agrarian idealism.

The Agrarian Ideal

Allen (2004) and Browne et al. (1992) warn against mythologizing farming. Allen points out that discussions about farming and food contain embedded ideologies. Embedded ideologies are ideas within a discourse that are treated as common sense; as such, they constitute a powerful force for orthodox thinking. One embedded ideology Allen identifies is agrarianism. Agrarianism is an emphasis on the traditional family farming. In agrarianism, all agricultural issues are reduced to farming. The farm is at the center. This leads to an attitude of “moral and economic primacy of farming over other occupations and ways of producing” (Allen 2004, 120).

Browne et al. (1992) argue that in the policy arena the agrarian ideal undermines the very values it seeks to promote. As the population urbanizes, people have lost a direct connection to farming, but agrarian

ideals are still promoted in books and movies. Disconnected from agriculture as it really is, this agrarian ideal is murky and subject to manipulation. Organizations can use this to their advantage in the policy process: “[The agrarian ideals] lack of specificity means that competing political interests can easily appropriate them” (Browne et al. 1992, 13). If an organization claims to speak for farmers than the agrarian ideal gives its views legitimacy in the political arena. The public is likely to listen and agree with organizations that appear to speak for farmers. In policy discussions this means it is important to establish legitimacy by showing a connection to farming.

First Explanation: Competing Coalitions

The literature about the policy process contains multiple frameworks that are helpful when assessing the structure of Oregon small farm policy. This paper identifies three and later compares them. The first is Advocacy Coalition Framework (ACF). ACF was developed by Sabatier and Jenkins-Smith (1993) and updated by Sabatier and Weible (2007) to explain policy outcomes by identifying the power of coalitions within a policy sub-system. The framework rests on a number of assumptions about politics, coalition formation, and policy changes. ACF views the political system as being dominated by specialists with strong beliefs. One assumption is that because of the increased complexity of modern political life, actors must specialize in certain subfields in order to have an impact on policy. Motivation for specialists and other actors to be involved in policy comes from underlying beliefs. A second assumption of ACF is that beliefs fall into two main categories: deep core beliefs and policy beliefs. Deep core beliefs are assumptions about how the world works. Policy core beliefs are positions on policies and provide the basis for coalitions. A third assumption of political nature is that “scientific and technical information plays an important role in modifying the beliefs of policy participants” (Sabatier and Weible 2007, 192). This means that support from researchers is important for policy outcomes. The major components of the Advocacy Coalition Framework are shown in Figure 1.

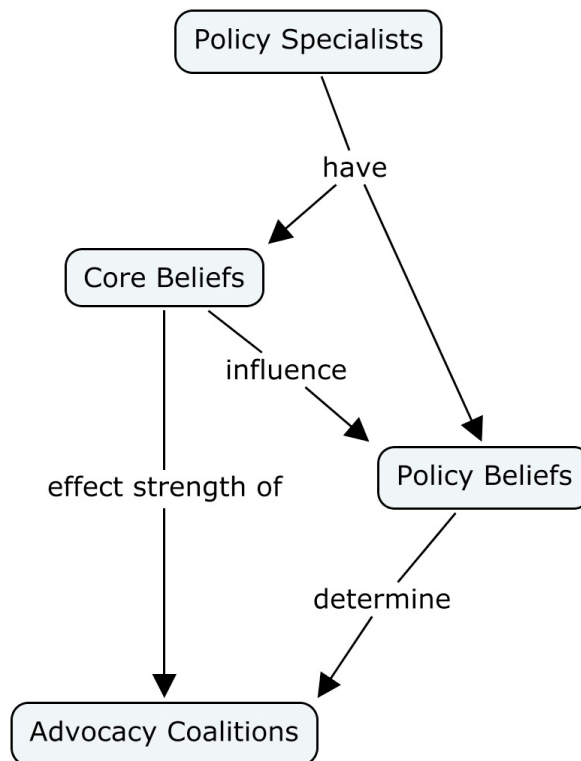


Figure 1. The Advocacy Coalition Framework

Advocacy coalitions are coordinated groups with shared policy objectives. They form on the basis of shared policy core beliefs. Coalitions form because the perceived cost of non-participation is high and the actual cost of coordination is low. Actors often perceive the power of opposing policy ideas to be greater than they are, thus motivating them to work with coalitions. The cost of being part of a coalition is relatively cheap when weighed against the benefit of passing a desired policy outcome. With today's technology the cost of coordination can be as inexpensive as sending an email or reading a website.

Policy change in ACF is traditionally seen as the product of policy-oriented learning or external shock (Sabatier and Weible 2007). Policy-oriented learning is the process of individuals changing their beliefs or behavior as a result of new information. If many individuals in a sub-system change their beliefs it can be a catalyst for policy change. The second way to change policy is through external shocks. A

sudden change in the political, economic, or social structure can lead to a change in the power of coalitions. A newly dominant coalition will be able to impose its policy ideas on the system.

Applying this framework to Oregon small farm policy explains policy as an outcome of competing coalitions. According to ACF, different coalitions will form based on different core beliefs and policy beliefs. Figure 2 shows the applied model of advocacy coalition framework explains farm policy.

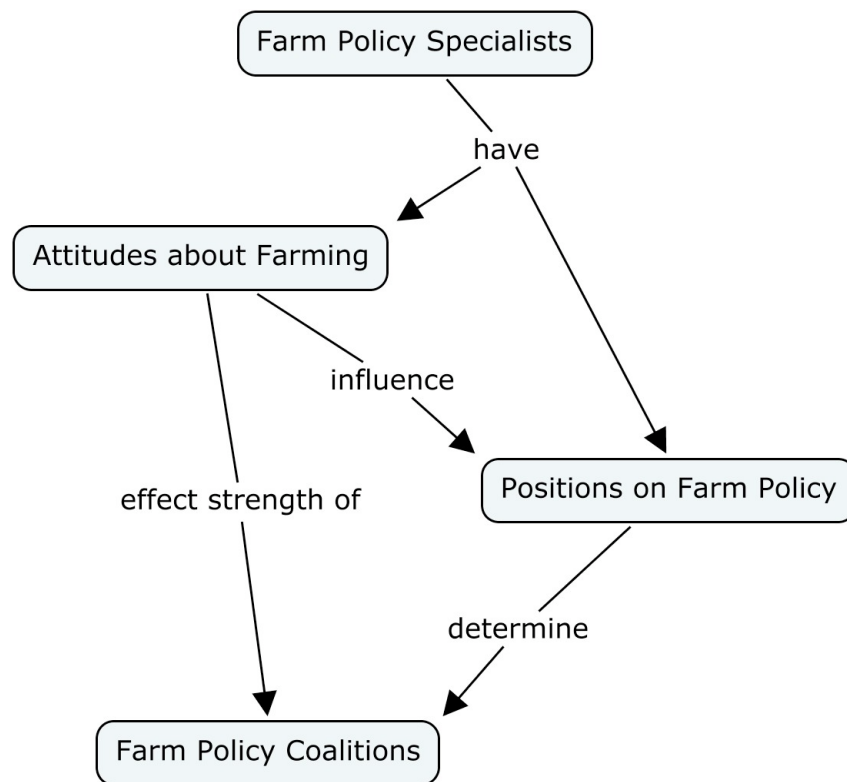


Figure 2. First Model: Competing Coalitions

Second Explanation: Iron Triangle Model

After World War II, political scientists noted that policymaking had shifted from higher authority to lower levels of government, which were given the autonomy to determine policy (Freeman 1955; Cater 1964). Cater (1964) argued that policy was determined by people in the legislature, executive, and unofficial “operatives from the outside” working together cooperatively (17). Cater called the process a “subgovernment.” J. Berry (1996) summarized a subgovernment as “interest group advocates,

legislators and their aides, and key agency administrators who interact on an ongoing basis and control policymaking in a particular area” (194). The strong relationship between legislators, interest groups, and agency officials led political scientists to call the process an iron triangle.

Policy is made in sub governments with relative autonomy from higher authorities. Subgovernments “strive to become self-sufficient in control of power in [their] own sphere” (Cater 1964, 17). An established subgovernment is a stable system, its members will work to maintain the status-quo and resist change. Policymaking by a subgovernment is done by consensus, behind closed doors. A legislative bill is crafted and decided on and then passed through the committees and onto the floor facing little or no opposition. The cooperative nature of a subgovernment means that those within the triangle will view each other favorably and oppose those outside the triangle. The second model is that policy is set by an iron triangle of state legislators, Oregon department of agriculture officials, and farm interest groups (Figure 3).

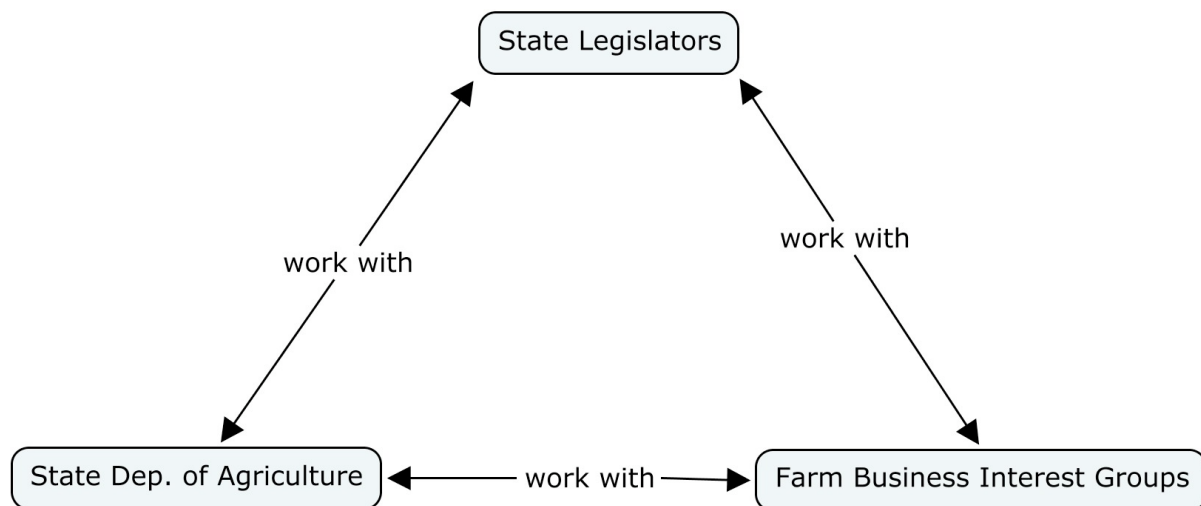


Figure 3. Second Model: Iron Triangle

Iron triangles work well for issues that do not have a lot of public exposure and require technical expertise. In these situations it seems natural that legislators, agency officials, and industry representatives would work together. A sudden change, such as increasing public opinion about an issue, can create conditions where the iron triangle is threatened.

Third Explanation: Transition Model

The third explanation is that the policy process for small farm policy is in transition from an iron triangle to a more public and open process. Transitions from iron triangles have been noted in the literature. Jones (1979) observed that subgovernments were common in energy policy until the energy crisis opened up policy to outside groups. In the spirit of the imagery of the iron triangle, Jones referred to the new arrangement as “sloppy large hexagons” (105). The shift from triangle to hexagon indicates the new groups involved, while the change from iron to sloppy demonstrate the increasing permeability of the system. More actors were being allowed into the policy discussion. J. Berry (1997) notes that Helco (1978) took the idea further and described new systems that he called “issue networks” (Helco 1978, 88).

The model proposed here is that that the iron triangle is in transition. The analysis will look for evidence of participation by other groups and an attitude of openness among policymakers in the iron triangle.

Figure 4 shows the iron triangle breaking apart and other potential groups entering the process.

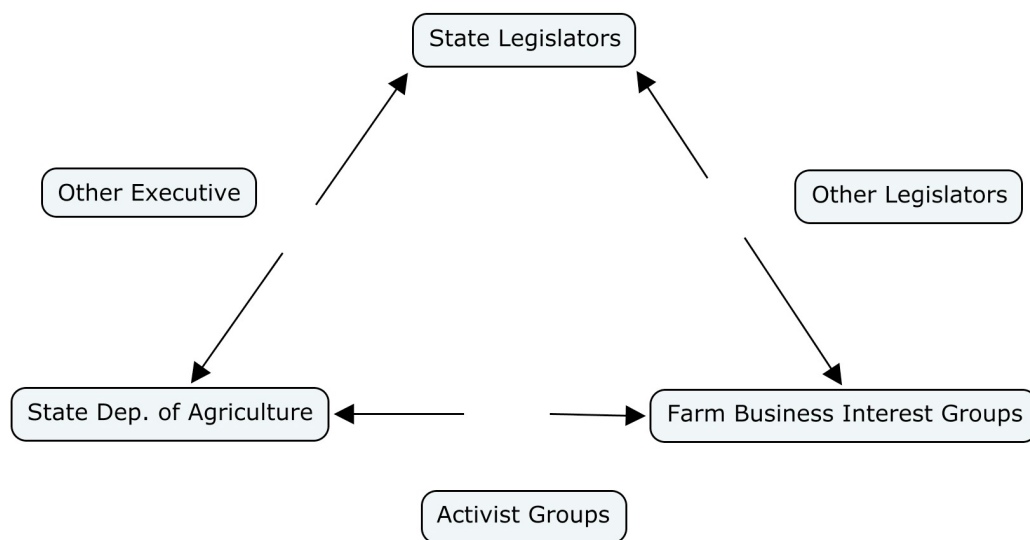


Figure 4. Third Model: Iron Triangle in Transition

RESEARCH METHODS

The research methodology for this project utilizes a qualitative analysis approach of purposive interviews, observations, and inductive theme analysis. The data which emerges out of this analysis is compared to the proposed hypotheses using the method of Alternative Competing Hypotheses (ACH).

Qualitative Approach

The approach for this research was qualitative with interviews and observations of legislative hearings. Interviews follow the structured interviewing method outlined by Bernard (2006). The questionnaire utilizes both closed and open-ended questions to capture a range of data (Bernard 2006, 268). Rather than define terms for the informants, the informants are asked to define key concepts as part of the questions. There are three parts to the questionnaire (Appendix A). The first section asks about the informants' view of farming in general in Oregon and what they would change about farming. The second part asks about the informants' view of small farms, both how they would define it and whether they have an important role. The third section asks the informant about their policy priorities and about whether they support specific small farm policies.

To supplement the data from the interviews, the study also includes participant observation. Participant observation allows a researcher to observe the process and sometimes even participate (Bernard 2006, 342). This study utilizes participant observation by attending two public hearings. The first held by the Oregon State Legislature House Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee on Feb. 2, 2011 and another held by the Senate Environment and Natural Resources Committee on May 3, 2011. Each of these hearings discussed small farm policy bills. While not participating directly in the hearing, the researcher observed what was said and made notes on the demeanor of the audience and legislators.

Sampling

The population for this study is policy specialists in organizations within Oregon's farm policy community. Previous research identifies a wide range of participants who influence policy (Sabatier and Weible 2007, 192). Based on this research and discussion with experts, this study finds five types of organizations that potentially influence Oregon farm policy: the Legislature, state agencies, industry associations, university researchers, and advocacy groups. Organizations were picked and for each a person who has influence over that organization's farm policy positions was contacted for an interview. This sampling is purposive as suggested by Bernard (2006, 189). Selected informants have policy knowledge and are in a position to influence policy authority. This sampling method will produce data that does not allow for a conclusion about the population of policy specialists, but rather provides insight into the structure around which the specialists operate.

The Policy Community

Through research and discussions with faculty members a number of organizations were identified as being potentially involved in Oregon's agriculture policy. Clearly the State Legislature is involved through the passage of bills. The bulk of legislative action is done in committees, which are composed of members selected by House or Senate leaders. Changes to bills, or amendments, are only done in committees and not allowed when the bill is on the floor, before the whole body (Oregon State Legislature 2010). The committee holds hearings to ask for expert, official, and citizen input. The committee then holds its own meeting, a work session, where they debate and vote on the bill and any amendments they would like to make to the bill. If passed, the bill is returned to the floor for a vote. For the success of the bill in the committee the chairperson is critical as well as a majority of members voting to pass it. In the House, agricultural bills are dealt with in the Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee and in the Senate, in the Environment and Natural Resources Committee.

Along with the legislature another official part of the policy community is the executive branch. The Governor, the Department of Agriculture, and the Board of Agriculture all play a role in farm policy. The staff of the Governor's Office handles policies of direct concern to the Governor. A branch of the office specifically dealing with Natural Resources would be involved with agriculture policy. The Governor also appoints members to the Board of Agriculture, which provides advice to the governor and has some rule-making authority (Oregon Department of Agriculture 2010). The Board of Agriculture gets staff support from the Department of Agriculture which is tasked with implementing agriculture policy. In my interviews and observations, officials from this department were often involved in discussion and debates about policy issues.

Agriculture is the concern of land grant universities. Oregon State University (OSU) has two entities involved in agriculture. The College of Agriculture which declares it part of its mission to be: "Oregon's principal source of knowledge relating to agricultural and food systems" (College of Agricultural Sciences 2011). The Dean of the College of Agriculture is by law on the Board of Agriculture. The University's Extension Service provides outreach and education to the people of Oregon. The Extension Service has a strong agricultural bent with programs in gardening, nutrition, food safety, and small farming.

A number of organizations in the state represent the agriculture industry. This paper looks at two, the Oregon Farm Bureau and Oregonians for Food and Shelter. The Oregon Farm Bureau represents "the interests of the state's farmers and ranchers in the public and policymaking arenas" (Oregon Farm Bureau 2011). Oregonians for Food and Shelter is an organization aimed at supporting all natural resource businesses and works alongside the Farm Bureau in support of Oregon farmers.

Theme Analysis

Bernard (2006) describes a process of data analysis where the analyst examines the data and looks for analytical categories that emerge, "themes" (492). Once themes are identified the data is marked for

the presence or absence of the themes. Data is compared within the themes and the themes are compared to construct a model of the data.

Informant responses during the first three interviews provided interesting data and informants shared a number of interesting stories. It was decided to keep the original questionnaire with one set of questions added to ask what role the informant and the informant's organization has in shaping farm policy. The new questions were added to get the informants to discuss their role in policy.

Analysis of Competing Hypotheses

As this paper examines three possible models to explain small farm policy in Oregon a method is needed to analyze which explanation fits best with the collected data. Heuer (1999) developed an approach to analyzing problems with multiple possible explanations. Heuer criticized the way he saw analysis being done:

People have a natural tendency to concentrate on confirming hypotheses they already believe to be true, and they commonly give more weight to information that supports a hypothesis than to information that weakens it. This is wrong; we should do just the opposite (Heuer 1999, 104).

Heuer's approach, Analysis of Competing Hypotheses (ACH), asks the researcher to identify all potential explanations and then analyze all the evidence for each hypothesis. Each piece of evidence is assessed as to whether it is consistent or inconsistent if the hypothesis were true. Figure 5 provides an example of this approach, trying to answer the question of what a colleague had for breakfast. Evidence can be concrete evidence, assumptions of the researcher, deductions, or even the lack of evidence. One of the pieces of evidence in Figure 5 is the lack of mentioning that he is hungry.

Question: What Did Robert Eat for Breakfast This Morning?

	H1: Eggs and Bacon	H2: Toast and Fruit	H3: Did not eat breakfast
Says he was really busy this morning	Consistent	Consistent	Consistent
Says he is vegetarian	Inconsistent	Consistent	Consistent
Did not mention that he was hungry	Consistent	Consistent	Inconsistent

Figure 5. Example of ACH Analysis

In ACH the focus is on eliminating hypotheses that are inconsistent, rather than confirming hypotheses.

In Figure 5, Hypothesis 1 is unlikely because he claims to be a vegetarian, however the evidence against hypothesis three is not enough to discount it. More evidence would need to be collected to distinguish hypothesis 2 and 3.

The value of Alternative Competing Hypotheses is that it makes the researcher analyze all the data without trying to fit it to a single hypothesis. It is an inductive process that allows the data to determine the analysis. The final product is a map that shows the process for arriving at the research conclusions. This paper uses ACH to test the three explanations about the politics of small farm policy based on data gathered in interviews and observations.

RESULTS

This section outlines the data that was collected and explores the themes that emerged from the data. The informants and hearings observed are described as well as the organization respondents' belong too. Seven policy specialists were interviewed and two hearings were observed. Specialists were interviewed based on being members of the organization identified as a part of the policy community.

The Sample

The first interview was with Shawn from the Oregon Farm Bureau. I met with him in the Oregon Capitol building where he works as a lobbyist. His identity as a lobbyist was evident as he stopped to talk with

multiple people before we began our interview. Shawn gave thoughtful detailed answers to my questions about farming and small farms and had a few stories to illustrate his point. He was less specific when it came to his stance on exact policies.

The second interview was with “John” who works for Oregon State University’s College of Agriculture. John and I talked in his office at OSU. John provided a different perspective and used many anecdotes. Like Shawn he was less specific, even uncertain, about his position on specific policies.

The third interview was with Scott who works for Oregon State University’s Extension Service. I met with Scott in his office on the OSU campus. He argued for an expansive definition of farming to include other natural resource activities. There were many themes in his interview that did not come up in the other interviews. On specific policies he offered little information, claiming to not be knowledgeable on that.

The fourth interview was of “Sam”, a state legislator. We talked in his office at the State Capitol. He gave extensive answers to the questions I asked in the interview and was very knowledgeable on the policies. It was clear that he had worked closely on many of these issues and had thought about them prior to our discussion.

The fifth interview was of Jim who is an official with Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA). Jim and I met in his office a few blocks from the State Capitol. Jim had a lot to say about the questions and had spent years working on policy issues. He provided great insights into the policy process.

The sixth interview was with Mark, a state legislator. My meeting with Mark was in his office in the State Capitol building. Mark appeared to have only recently become involved with agriculture policy, but articulated many concerns about policy issues and the policy process.

The seventh interview was with Terry of Oregonians for Food and Shelter. The interview with Terry was in his office which is part of a larger building housing industry lobbyists across the street from the State

Capitol building. Terry had detailed positions on policies and some of the language he used to describe farming was different from that used in other interviews.

I sent interview requests to representatives of the Governor's Office, Board of Agriculture, Friends of Family Farmers, and Oregon Environmental Council, but was unable to schedule interviews with these people. The president of Friends of Family Farmers, Kendra Kimbirauskas, provided testimony at both hearings. This testimony will be analyzed along with the interview transcripts of the others. The lack of interviews with representatives of these organizations is a limitation of this study.

I observed two hearings. The first hearing was of the House Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee on February 2, 2011. The hearing was to allow for public input on a number of bills being considered. Two bills were of note, House Bill 2336, concerning food regulations on farmers market products and House Bill 2222, labeled the Friends of Family Farmers bill, which contained a number of changes on a wide range of policy issues. The hearing lasted almost three hours because many people spoke and they had to open an overflow room for additional people.

The second hearing observed was of the Senate Committee on Environment and Natural Resources on May 3, 2011. House bills 2336 and 2872, both of which had passed the House were being considered in the Senate. There were fewer people at this hearing compared to the first. Only a few people spoke, but their information contrasts with information from the interviews. These differences will be developed in the analysis.

Themes

Economic language frames the discussion of farming

All informants described farming in economic terms. There was an emphasis on the products themselves and on their economic value. Words used in the description of farming included: commodity, industry,

producer, export, and economic output. Shawn, of the Farm Bureau, opened his description of Oregon farming with this: "Oregon is the second largest producer of diversified commodities." Shawn was the most prolific user of economic language; he went on to use the phrase commodity ten more times during the interview. John, an OSU representative, also saw farming in economic terms. When asked what he would change about farming, he replied, "There are opportunities to make agriculture consistently more profitable." Likewise Scott, of OSU, talked about the need to "Optimize return on investment." The informants view farming primarily as business.

Farming was also described as economically important to Oregon. When asked if farming was important to Oregon, Mark, a legislator, replied: "From east to west, north to south it is really economically a real key component of the economic vitality of our state." Likewise Terry, from Oregonians for Food and Shelter, and Jim, of Oregon Department of Agriculture, both highlighted farming as an important economic driver for the state. The importance of farming in Oregon is framed with economic language.

Supporters of Friends of Family Farmers at the hearings also used economic language although it was focused on the individual farmer. One small farmer described farmers as "agricultural entrepreneurs." Another farmer described small farms as "a small business that is providing jobs in Oregon." Multiple farmers when introducing themselves at the hearing declared how much they made in farm sales. In each of these instances economic language is being used to try and show that the farmer plays a larger economic role.

The widespread use of economic language to describe farming indicates that informants find it important to connect farming with the economy. By making this connection they are seeking to legitimize farming as work, both as a profession and for individual farmers. The use of economic language by the small farmers at the hearings seems to be a way of saying that they should be seen as good farmers because they make money and create jobs. It is an argument for their participation in the

policy discussion, represented as the legislative committee. In a similar fashion, the informants who highlight the importance of farming to the state's economy are stating that farm policy is important for the state. It is also a warning, that deviating from the prescribed farm policy could destabilize the economy.

Farming provides economic stability

A number of informants described farming in Oregon as being a source of economic stability. The stability of farming was discussed in reference to current economic problems. As Mark, a legislator, put it, "As other economic influences can kind of have cycles to them our [agriculture] base really provides a very stabilizing influence year after year." Shawn, of the Farm Bureau, also referred to stability amidst economic trouble, "What we saw over this last economic decline was that farm sales while they did decline considerably, were much more stable than any other sector." Jim and Terry did not use the term stable, but made points similar to Mark and Shawn. Terry said farming would, "weather most of the problems that manufacturing, high-tech, or any of the other more industrialized, if you want to call it that, markets can experience." By describing farming as stable the informants are asserting the economic value of farming over other enterprises. That a number of informants used such similar concepts hints at possible coordination between them.

Raising Food for People

Secondary to the economic frame, some expressed the view that farming was connected to food and to people eating food. Terry, of Oregonians for Food and Shelter, put it succinctly, "The bottom line is we all have to eat." When asked what he would change about farming, Sam, a legislator, had a forceful argument about consumers and food:

I think there is a general sense of buying local nutritious foods grown under sustainable conditions is a positive, but it's not universal. Plenty of people are going to Wal-Mart and buying crappy imports and not supporting their local people for the cost of a few cents more. So people are supportive of minimum wage laws and all these things that do increase the cost of growing the food and then not being supportive with their own money of those very same laws...It's not so much the farming, because I don't want the laws reduced. It's more consumers, some consumers, attitude about food.

Terry likewise saw consumer education as important in the future, but he seemed to reject emerging attitudes about food saying consumers need to be: "More discerning and maybe a little less ready to accept what you know Robert Redford or some of these other Hollywood stars have to say about our food." Terry's comments indicate that he recognizes that views of food are shaping people's views of farming. Scott, from OSU, had a positive view of consumers and food. In talking about the importance of small farms he said, "The consumers are demanding and creating a market for locally produced, generally small scale foods and that is coming off the small farm landscape."

The connection between consumers and food was described in the legislative hearings from the farmer's perspective. One farmer described the goal of family farms to, ""provide safe and nutritious food for all Oregonians." Another farmer simply said that she loved farming and "wants to raise food for people." Of the seven people interviewed only three described farming as connected to food, while all used economic language. This shows a disconnect in the general narrative between farming as production (economic) and farming as purpose (food).

The varying use of food language when discussing show distinctive views of farming. Those who did not mention food see farming simply as like any other industry, just about making a profit. Some informants saw that small farm policy issues were being driven by consumers demand for locally grown food. They

saw consumers as wanting to connect their food back to a farm. Finally, the small farmers who spoke directly connected the work they do to providing food for people. This language adds meaning beyond simply farming as business; it adds the importance of providing food and cultural context surrounding that. The varying views of food and farming show that is an issue that is fluid and undecided. This is important to keep in mind when analyzing the debate around small farm policy.

A Personal Connection to Farming

A few informants emphasized a personal connection to farming. John, of OSU, chose to define a small farm by relating it to the farm he grew up on: “My definition of a family farm is a farm the size I grew up on or smaller.” John was proud of his personal connection to farming: “I grew up on what people would describe as a storybook family farm.” Sam, a legislator, also referred to his family’s farm to illustrate the points he made in his responses. Many of the people who spoke at the hearings were quick to declare their connection to farming. One of the committee members in the hearing introduced himself as married to a farmer and owner of a pear orchard. Of the 32 people who spoke at the hearing on Feb. 2, 15 said they were farmers or had family members that farmed. Two said they were not farmers but had a desire to farm, “Young people like myself would like to farm.” Clearly personal connections to farming are salient when the discussion is about farming.

There is a deeper meaning to this personal connection to farming. It points to an ideal about farming and the farmer. By announcing their connection to farming the informants are declaring that they can speak legitimately about farming, they are members of the club of those who grew up on farms. They are expressing the importance of life on the farm. The idealization of farm life is shared across the informants; it is a common bond. This a clear manifestation of the agrarian ideology discussed earlier. When analyzing policymakers it is important to recognize that an agrarian ideology colors the

perception of farm policy. While informants shared a common agrarian ideal about farming, they disagreed about who could be called a farmer.

Pretend Farmers

When asked in the initial interviews how they would define a small farm, the informants said it was hard to define and when they talked about it further, they revealed why. Shawn, a lobbyist with the Farm Bureau, declared that, “It is doing a disservice to believe that small farmers look and act a certain way.” He went on to warn that others were applying normative labels to farmers: “This is a good farm and this is a bad farm.” John, of OSU, echoed this in describing an attitude among some small farmers of “the other guys are big and bad. Me and the little guys are good guys.” John summarized the contention as, “It’s a complex question and you can get into some debates about it that get to be very personal.” The question about how to define a small farm was hard to answer, because it meant defining the farmer was contentious.

This contention existed in other interviews. When asked to define a small farm, Jim, from ODA, responded by first defining a farmer as “someone who is farming with the intent to make money and not just something they do for a lifestyle.” He defined the latter as a “hobby farm.” John was also concerned about who was a “legitimate farmer”, he worried that if farm tax deferments were changed some people could “pretend I am a farmer for three years then I turn around and sell [the land] for development.”

Some of the contention seemed to stem from current political discourse. Sam, a legislator, explained how some small farmers were being described by lobbyists in the media: “Other ones write letters about some of the small farm groups, nasty, nasty letters in the Capitol Press about them. That they have a secret agenda, end all farming and stuff like that.” At the hearings, the discussion was also contentious. One witness explained his support for a bill: “[I] would like to see our small farmers have more of a

foothold in the state legislature because currently it is mainly dominated by the large fellas.” Another witness countered, “The perceived difference between large and small scale is not as big as people would have us believe.” By defining some people as farmers and other as not farmers is attempt to control whose concerns will be addressed by policymakers.

Who can legitimately claim to be a farmer is important because those it determines who will have a voice in the policy debate. The informants reveal that rather than argue against the positions of those they disagree with; they attempt to argue that they are not real farmers. One group argues that some small farmers are not real farmers, while another group argues that large farmers are not real farmers. Who can identify as farmer is important because farmers hold special status in the policymaking. The agrarian ideal and the economic and food importance of farming, which is discussed above, create a condition where the policy concerns expressed by farmers are given weight and validity in policymaking. Therefore it becomes important to define who is a farmer in policy discussions.

Excluding Outliers

One way that the informants dealt with outsiders in the system was to marginalize them. About accusations that Farm Bureau supported corporate agriculture Shawn said, “What I try to do is not advocate for outliers, but what is going to help the most people. And the most people are small farmers.” Shawn is saying he is not advocating for the few larger farms, but also not for the really small farms at the other end of the scale. In discussing a policy proposal to require the Board of Agriculture to have seats for farmers who market locally, Mark separated out the group from mainstream agriculture: “I think there is a big difference between marketers and those folks that really understand Oregon agriculture.” Farmers in the hearing also appeared to exclude the views of others. Two witnesses raised food safety concerns and there was audible disagreement from farmers in the audience and eye rolling. The attitude exhibited in the interviews and hearings show an attempt to define legitimacy.

Resisting Change

The policy specialists were asked two questions related to change, If you could change anything about farming in Oregon what would you change? And what would you want farming in Oregon to look like 20 years from now? Some were surprised to be asked about change. John, of OSU, spent twenty seconds thinking about the second question before replying, “I don’t know that it would change dramatically.” Shawn, of the Farm Bureau, expressed that he did not want it to change: “I wouldn’t change anything about farming in Oregon.” Sam, Scott, and Jim also stated that they would want farming to look the same in twenty years. Mark, a legislator, was concerned that farming might be reduced in the future, “I would just like to see them have at least as significant of an influence as they do now.” The informants seemed hesitant or even resistant to consider changes to farming.

The lack of support for change shows that informants are status-quo oriented. They would rather the system stay exactly as it is than change. This indicates that they are supportive of maintaining existing policy. This resistance to change combined with the previously noted themes of agrarian ideal and validity reveals that the policy system has a set of factors, which create a strong dominant perspective.

Openness to new groups in the political process

Some informants encouraged outsiders into the system. Making an agreement for more economic development directed at farming Jim, from ODA, said: “That shouldn’t just be coming from the department of Agriculture, it should be coming from Business Oregon and some of the other economic development folks too.” Jim wanted business interest groups to be supportive of farming needs and involved with the policy process. During the hearing, two representatives described the process that led to House Bill 2336. Rep. Clem talked with farmers at a farmers market and held hearing on the issue. Rep. Weingard chaired a task force where farmers and the Farmers’ Market Association worked with Oregon Department of Agriculture to create the bill. This is evidence of a willingness to allow small

farmers and others into the policy process. In a similar vein, Sam, a legislator, noted that the Farm Bureau demonstrated an openness to dialogue, “Some of their lobbyists want to try and bridge the gap between small farms and Farm Bureau.” The Farm Bureau is a recurring topic in discussions of Oregon farm policy.

Farm Bureau at the Center

Informants related the central role of the Farm Bureau in anecdotes and its influence was observed directly. Sam, a legislator, recounted a story about trying to get a bill passed: “Farm Bureau was going to oppose it originally; I talked with several board members. I said how can you oppose this it is preposterous and they talked to, they took a position not to oppose it.” The support of the Farm Bureau appears to be critical for the passage of bills relating to farming. The Farm Bureau also plays a role when there are issues with farmers. Shawn, from the Farm Bureau, described how the state Department of Agriculture contacted him about an issue with farmers doing internships on farms. Bringing representatives of the Farm Bureau into official discussions about farmers shows their importance. One informant acknowledged the Farm Bureau as a source of information. Mark, a legislator, suggested I interview one of his constituents, the president of the Farm Bureau saying, “He knows more about [agriculture] then I’ll ever know.” Later that day in an interview with Terry at Oregonians for Food and Shelter, the president of the Farm Bureau called in the middle of the interview! In another instance, an interview with a legislator was delayed so he could meet to discuss a bill with someone from “the governor’s office.” One the way into the interview I noticed my informant from the Farm Bureau leaving the previous meeting. It became clear that the Farm Bureau had a central role in discussions about farm policy.

The implication of the central role of the Farm Bureau is that it is a major factor in farm policy. That the organization was on the mind of informants and its presence in meeting with policymakers indicate that

the organization works to influence policy. This influence is so pervasive that it seems to go beyond just advocating positions on policies, but also setting the agenda for which issues are discussed. Indeed a number of informants raised policy issues similar to the informant from the Farm Bureau. Any analysis of farm policy in Oregon has to take into consideration the role of the Farm Bureau.

DISCUSSION

Who is Legitimate?

Connecting the themes is the issue of legitimacy. Legitimacy means acceptance into political discourse. Legitimate actors are allowed to participate in the political process and their views are treated credibly. A number of the themes address ways that actors try to gain legitimacy. Language can be used as a sign of or appeal for legitimacy. As noted above, economic language dominates the discussion of farming. The informants used economic language as a way to prove their expertise on farming. In contrast, those informants that emphasized the farming-food connection were appealing to an alternative discourse from the farming is economic discourse. They hoped to gain legitimacy among people who saw the farming-food connection as important.

The themes of personal connection to farming and defining the farmer are also important to legitimacy. Underlying these themes is the agrarian ideal. Farmers gain legitimacy because they are glorified by culture. If a person can be recognized as a farmer, or speaking for farmers, the person's needs are viewed as important by the system. This explains the strong contention in defining farmers, power is given to those recognized as farmers.

Resisting change and excluding outsiders are ways of trying to preserve legitimacy. By resisting change informants exhibit a desire to maintain a system that is providing them with access to power. Outsiders are excluded when they might challenge the system. Of course if the basis of legitimacy is changing, for

example becoming defined more in terms of food rather than economics, then by being open to outsiders could be a way to guarantee legitimacy in a new system. This might explain why some informants were open to outsiders.

Revisiting the Literature

The ideas raised at the beginning of the paper concerning the importance of small farms and agrarian idealism were present to a varying degree in the data collected. The concern of Berry (1997) and Ikerd (2008) about the viability of small farms is echoed by statements in the data, notably by the farmers who attended the hearings. The policy proposals being advanced by these farmers were framed as important for the viability of their farms. Goldschmidt's (1978) idea that small farms support rural communities was not mentioned by any of the informants. This does not challenge the academic validity of the argument, but shows that this issue is not salient in policy discussions.

The agrarian idealism discussed by Allen (2004) did emerge as a theme in the data. Informants highlighted their connection past and present to family farms, which is at the center of the agrarian ideal. In debating the legitimacy of certain farmers and resisting change the informants showed that being identified as a farmer conveyed power and privilege. Although the agrarian ideal was pervasive, it was not recognized by the informants. The theme of the Farm Bureau at the center of the policy debate shows echoes what Browne et al (1992). The Farm Bureau is an organization that claims to represent farmers and is given power to shape and control policy. Policy analysis must take into account agrarian values and their role in shaping the system.

Application of Analysis of Competing Hypotheses

In this section the evidence from the themes is analyzed using the Analysis of Competing Hypotheses (ACH) method. Three models were developed from the literature to explain the political process in

Oregon for small farm policy. The first is that competition between coalitions explains policy outcomes, the Advocacy Coalition Framework. The second is that cooperation between legislators, state agencies, and industry groups explains policy outcomes, the iron triangle. The third is that the system is in transition away from the iron triangle and opening up to outside groups. Evidence collected from interviews with policy specialists and observations of legislative hearings is assessed for each hypothesis. For this analysis twelve pieces of evidence were observed in the themes above. A table is constructed with each model in a column and a list of evidence gleaned from the theme analysis in the rows. Each piece of evidence is assessed whether it would be consistent or inconsistent with the model if the model were true.

The Advocacy Coalition Framework model predicts distinct advocacy coalitions with separate core and policy beliefs. The evidence is assessed based on those criteria (Table 2). The first evidence point, common use of economic language, is inconsistent with coalitions with separate core beliefs, which would use different language. The second evidence data is, select informants describe farming as stabilizing, and this would be consistent with a coalition with distinct core beliefs. The variation in the view of farming's connection to food, the fourth piece of evidence, is consistent with a policy environment of multiple coalitions. The fifth evidence identified, contention over who is legitimacy a farmer is consistent with competing coalitions. Complaints about openness of the system and resistance to change in the system are inconsistent with the ACF model because there are no restrictions on the formation of coalitions.

The seventh piece of evidence is comments marginalizing the role of others, this consistent with advocacy coalitions. The desire of some for more openness in the system and others in the system, the eighth piece of evidence is consistent with ACF because differences are based on beliefs and not power and control. The ninth piece of evidence is the cooperation among many different participants both

official and unofficial in drafting HB 2336 about regulations of farmers markets. This evidence is inconsistent with ACF because it involved the cooperation of people with different core and policy beliefs. The tenth piece of evidence is the story by one informant of needing the Farm Bureau's support for passing a bill, this is inconsistent with a system where people with shared policy beliefs form into coalitions. The eleventh piece of evidence is multiple informants mentioning the Farm Bureau president this is consistent with how a coalition with shared beliefs would behave. The final piece of evidence is the meeting between the legislator, governor's office, and the Farm Bureau. This is inconsistent in ACF where policy decisions are made by competing coalitions. Overall, the evidence varies in consistency with the Advocacy Coalition Framework.

Table 2. Analysis of Advocacy Coalition Framework

Evidence	Advocacy Coalitions
Common use of economic language	Inconsistent
Select informants describe farming as stabilizing	Consistent
Variation in view of farming-food connection	Consistent
Contention over who is farmer	Consistent
Complaints about openness of system by small farmers	Inconsistent
Resistant to change in system	Inconsistent
Marginalizing the role of others	Consistent
Desire for openness and others in the system	Consistent
Cooperation in creating farmers market bill	Inconsistent
Farm Bureau support necessary for bill passage	Inconsistent
Referred to Farm Bureau president	Consistent
Meeting between legislator, governor's office, and Farm Bureau	Inconsistent

The iron triangle model is a closed system of legislative committees, executive agencies, and interest groups setting policy. The presence and power of these three actors and a closed process are indicators of this model. In analyzing the evidence, common use of economic language is consistent with an iron triangle in control (Table 3). The informants who described farming as stabilizing were from the three groups highlighted in the iron triangle and therefore consistent with this model. However the

informants who talked about food and farming were not from this group, which is inconsistent with the iron triangle where the message would appear uniform. Likewise contention over who is a farmer and therefore has a voice in the policy discussion is inconsistent with an iron triangle where the system is closed and there is little contention. Complaints about the openness of the system indicate that it could be a closed system, consistent with iron triangle. Resistance to change and marginalizing those outside is in line with the insular system of an iron triangle. A desire for openness and others in the system is however inconsistent with an iron triangle.

Among the specific examples in evidence, cooperation in creating the farmers market bill is inconsistent with the closed process of an iron triangle. The role of the Farm Bureau in helping pass bills and influence the process behind the scenes is consistent with interest group behavior in an iron triangle. Finally the observed meeting between the legislature, governor's office, and Farm Bureau is strongly consistent with an iron triangle. Most of the evidence is consistent with an iron triangle model of policy.

Table 3. Analysis of Iron Triangle

Evidence	Iron Triangle
Common use of economic language	Consistent
Select informants describe farming as stabilizing	Consistent
Variation in view of farming-food connection	Inconsistent
Contention over who is farmer	Inconsistent
Complaints about openness of system by small farmers	Consistent
Resistant to change in system	Consistent
Marginalizing the role of others	Consistent
Desire for openness and others in the system	Inconsistent
Cooperation in creating farmers market bill	Inconsistent
Farm Bureau support necessary for bill passage	Consistent
Referred to Farm Bureau president	Consistent
Meeting between legislator, governor's office, and farm bureau	Consistent

The third model to evaluate is an iron triangle in transition to a more open system. Indicators of this model are actors from outside the iron triangle engaged in the process and an open system. The

evidence of common use of economic language is consistent with a system in transition where some views might still be generally held. A few informants espousing different views of farming and food is consistent with transition where new actors and ideas are entering the system. Contention over defining who is a farmer is consistent with a system that is opening up to non-traditional actors. Likewise complaints about the openness of the system would be likely if the system was in transition. Resistance to change and marginalizing others is consistent with a transition where the iron triangle is attempting to maintain control over process. A desire for openness and others in the system is strongly consistent with a transitioning system.

The evidence for the specific policy examples observed is mixed for a system in transition. The openness and cooperation seen in passing the Farmers Market bill is indicative of a system in transition. However, the central role of the Farm Bureau is inconsistent with a system that is opening up. The meeting between the legislator, governor's office, and Farm Bureau is inconsistent with a system in transition towards a more open system. However the presence of the governor's office as an executive branch group not associated with an iron triangle is possibly a sign that the system is opening up as in Figure 4. Overall, the most of the evidence is consistent with a model of an iron triangle in transition.

Table 4. Analysis of Iron Triangle in Transition

Evidence	Transition Model
Common use of economic language	Consistent
Select informants describe farming as stabilizing	Consistent
Variation in view of farming-food connection	Consistent
Contention over who is farmer	Consistent
Complaints about openness of system by small farmers	Consistent
Resistant to change in system	Consistent
Marginalizing the role of others	Consistent
Desire for openness and others in the system	Consistent
Cooperation in creating farmers market bill	Consistent
Farm Bureau support necessary for bill passage	Inconsistent
Referred to Farm Bureau president	Inconsistent
Meeting between legislator, governor's office, and farm bureau	Inconsistent

Table 5 brings together all three models into a single table for comparison. One of the main principals of Analysis of Competing Hypotheses is that evidence which is inconsistent with a model be given the most weight in analysis. The idea is to disprove potential explanations rather than confirm them. The model of advocacy coalitions is unlikely because it is inconsistent with half of the evidence points. The models of an iron triangle and a triangle in transition are both inconsistent with some evidence, but not enough to be discarded. Close examination of the table for these models shows to sets of evidence. Evidence of a system opening up with some contention and new cooperation and evidence of continued collaboration between legislators and the Farm Bureau. The first points to a system in transition and the second points to a continuing iron triangle. Based on evidence of both continuing iron triangle cooperation and outsiders bringing new ideas into the process; the structure of small farm policy in Oregon appears to be at the beginning of a transition.

Table 5. Analysis of Competing Hypotheses

Evidence	Advocacy Coalitions	Iron Triangle	Triangle in Transition
Common use of economic language	Inconsistent	Consistent	Consistent
Select informants describe farming as stabilizing	Consistent	Consistent	Consistent
Variation in view of farming-food connection	Consistent	Inconsistent	Consistent
Contention over who is farmer	Consistent	Inconsistent	Consistent
Complaints about openness of system by small farmers	Inconsistent	Consistent	Consistent
Resistant to change in system	Inconsistent	Consistent	Consistent
Marginalizing the role of others	Consistent	Consistent	Consistent
Desire for openness and others in the system	Consistent	Inconsistent	Consistent
Cooperation in creating farmers market bill	Inconsistent	Inconsistent	Consistent
Farm Bureau support necessary for bill passage	Inconsistent	Consistent	Inconsistent
Referred to Farm Bureau president	Consistent	Consistent	Inconsistent
Meeting between legislator, governor's	Inconsistent	Consistent	Inconsistent

office, and farm bureau			
Number of Inconsistent Evidence	6	4	3
Likelihood	Not likely	Somewhat likely	Somewhat likely

Policy Recommendations

Need for a long-term agriculture vision

Based on my discussions with informants there was no vision for what the future of agriculture would like in Oregon. Most could articulate any changes to the system beyond how it is currently structured. A discussion about the future would provide a needed forum where ideas can be discussed and would help continue the transition that the system is in.

Highlight the importance of small farms to rural communities

The connection between farm policy and rural communities exists in the literature, but is not salient in policy discussions. It would be good to tie discussion of agriculture policy to the health and wellbeing of rural communities. This might lead to positive changes to farm policy.

Acknowledge the role of agrarianism

Agrarian attitudes were pervasive in how informants described farming, but not recognized as such by these informants. The policy discussion should include recognition of agrarian ideals and who they help to empowers and who they ignore or marginalize. Farm policy might favor farm owners at the expense of other groups such as farmworkers and consumers.

The Farm Bureau should not be discounted

The Farm Bureau clearly played an important role in the process of constructing and debating small farm policy. This needs to be recognized by those wishing to change policy. Based on discussions with

informants there appears to be room for policy change within the Farm Bureau. Actors attempting to change the system should not rule out working with the Farm Bureau.

Oregon State University should be more involved in agriculture policy debates

The university was observed to have little involvement or knowledge of the policy process. As the state's land grant university with a College of Agriculture and Extension Services it would seem to be a necessary role to be involved in state's policy discussions. Policy debates would benefit from scientific research and technical knowledge, not just specifically on agricultural, but also its impact within the community. There is an opportunity for the university to make a vital contribution to the state's policy.

CONCLUSION

This essay explored the structure of the small farm policy process in Oregon. Informants from institutions involved in the policy process were interviewed about their views of farming and attitudes about currently debated policies. Data from these interviews was used to analyze three models that could potentially explain the process: Advocacy Coalition Framework, iron triangles, and a system in transition from an iron triangle. Using an evidence-based approach, Analysis of Competing Hypotheses, the models were compared. The analysis found that iron triangle and triangle in transition both remained likely, the conclusion is that the system is beginning the process of transitioning from an iron triangle.

The analysis was limited by the data collected and methods. The data was cross-sectional, meaning it only looked at the system for one section of time. Ideally, the policy process would be observed over multiple legislative sessions to look for similarities and changes over time. The small number of persons interviewed makes conclusions limited in scope. Analysis of the role of specific organizations is limited when based on interviews of one person in that organization. It was not possible to obtain interviews

with some organizations in time for this study. Interviews with representatives of Friends of Family Farmers, the Governor's Office, and Board of Agriculture would have increased the scope of this study. The methodology was designed with the first model of Advocacy Coalition Framework in mind. Detailed questions about the policy process would have improved the data collection. Informants could have been asked if and how the policy process had changed over time.

This study raises questions for future research. To what extent is the process around farm policy in transition? Is iron triangle behavior a common part of the Oregon legislative system? How is the Farm Bureau and other organizations adapting to a changing policy environment? The answers to these questions would provide a more comprehensive picture of the structure of farm policy in Oregon.

I was led to this research because of my surprise that Oregon seemed to be lacking in its support for small farmers. Through my research I discovered a complex political culture where policy is dominated by an iron triangle of insider specialists. However, there are indications that the system is in transition. In the future, outside groups are likely to have their voices heard in the process. Someday the voice of the rancher in Eastern Oregon will be heard in Salem.

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Appendix A: Questionnaire

I am going to ask you a series of questions. You are free to decline to answer any of the questions and you may stop the interview at any time. In the first set of questions, I am going to ask you about your view of farming in Oregon.

1. How would you characterize farming in Oregon to someone from another state?
2. Is farming important to Oregon? Why or why not?
3. If you could change anything about farming in Oregon what would you change? What would you maintain?
4. What would you want farming in Oregon to look like 20 years from now?

For these next questions, I am going to ask what you think about small-scale farming in Oregon.

5. How would you define a small farm?
6. Do small farms have a role in Oregon agriculture? If so, what role?
 - a. If participant indicates that small farms are important or not important, Probe: **Why are small farms important/not important?** (use participant's wording)
7. For the following statements: Do you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree?
 - a. Small farms are a key part of Oregon's agriculture community.
 - b. Small farms provide economic benefit to Oregon.
 - c. Current Oregon policy towards small farms needs to be changed.

The last set of questions asks about specific policies.

8. First, please describe your top 3 to 5 farm policy priorities
 - a. Now rank them in order of priority
 - b. If participant hasn't explained why policies are important, probe: **Can you give me more information about why the top two policies are so important for you?**

These questions ask about specific policies that are being debated by legislators or could be debated in the future:

9. Do you know about House Bill 2222?
 - a. If know: Do you support it?
 - i. If no to support: **Why do you not support the bill?**

1. Probe if needed: **Which parts not support?**
- b. If don't know, explain the parts. **There are four parts of the bill:**
 - i. **The first is an inspection exemption for farms with 1000 birds or less. Do you support this part?**
 - ii. **The second requires two seats on Board of Agriculture for local marketers. Do you support this part?**
 - iii. **The third changes regulations to allow increase in raw milk sales. Do you support this part?**
 - iv. **The fourth, allows new farmers to receive farm deferments when they begin farming. Do you support this part?**

Please tell me if you support the following policies and why or why not:

10. Increasing state financial support for federal USDA slaughter and meat processing facilities

11. Exempting direct farm marketers from certain state food regulations (House Bill 2336)

The interview is over. Thank you for your time and I will be in contact in the future when I send you a copy of the transcript of our interview.