

Submitter: Susan Richman
On Behalf Of: Everyone
Committee: House Committee On Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3372

Co-chairs Helm and Owens, Vice-Chair Finger McDonald and members of the House Committee on Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources and Water:

My name is Susan Richman and I am a farmer, local planning commission board member, dedicated community member, and an advocate for allowing the American people to feed themselves and each other. I live in Willamina. I am writing today in support of HB 3372. Currently in Oregon it is legal to water a ½ acre garden or use 5,000 gal/day for a commercial purpose, but neither of those apply to growing food and farm products for sale. Why is it legal to use the water for personal use, but selling a single zucchini from my garden would mean I was breaking the law?

This personally impacts me because:

The people have the right to grow food to feed themselves and others.

A half acre garden will not affect the sales of larger growers.

Allowing and even encouraging small scale food production provides our communities, whether city, suburban, or rural, to feed themselves in the event of the larger system being disrupted.

The small growers can empower their neighborhood by providing food but also in the event of a food crisis of any kind, they can provide the knowledge of how to grow food.

The current loss of support and of jobs demonstrates how this small bill can have a tremendous impact as people face hard times.

Our local food banks fed over 350 families weekly during Covid. We may not be able to do that unless we can help local producers continue to produce food for their community.

We need to be realistic about what we prioritize for water use in our state. Allowing people to grow food or farm products for sale with a gallon restriction on ½ acre will not bankrupt the system, and farming is too much work for people to rush into production on such a small scale. Give communities back the ability to feed and provide for themselves, pass HB 3372.

Thank you,

Susan Richman
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