

Submitter: Adam Sunshine

On Behalf Of:

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 Adam Sunshine, and I am a farm worker and farmers market manager living in Hillsboro, Oregon. I am writing today to voice my strong support for HB 3372. Currently, Oregon's domestic exempt well law allows individuals to water a ½ acre of land or use 5,000 gallons per day for various purposes, but not for growing food or farm products for sale. This technicality is outdated and harmful to small farmers like myself who are trying to provide fresh, local food to our communities.

I work as the Assistant Manager of Hillsdale Farmers Market in Southwest Portland, where I see firsthand how important small farms are to our local food system. Many vendors at our market rely on small plots of land to produce the vegetables, fruits, and flowers that feed our community. This restriction on commercial gardening using domestic wells creates unnecessary barriers for them.

Allowing commercial gardens to use domestic wells on a ½ acre of land with a daily gallon limit would make a meaningful difference for me and other small farmers. This would help us grow food more efficiently, increase our productivity, and contribute to the local economy without burdening the water system. As the Oregon Water Resources Department itself has noted, domestic wells account for a tiny portion of the overall groundwater use in the state.

From my experience working with Hillsdale Farmers Market, I know that when local farms are supported, the entire community benefits. Fresh, nutritious food becomes more accessible, and we build resilience within our food system. Preventing small farmers from selling their produce due to outdated statutes is counterproductive and undermines efforts to build strong, local economies.

I urge you to pass HB 3372 to allow small farmers like myself to continue feeding our communities within the reasonable exempt uses we already have. Let's prioritize local food production and support the hard work of small-scale farmers across Oregon.

Thank you,
Adam Sunshine