

Submitter: James Abeles

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3372

My name is Jim Abeles, and I'm a farmer on Sauvie Island in Multnomah County. Though this doesn't affect our farm, I'm writing in strong support of HB 3372 because we need to support small farmers now more than ever.

Right now in Oregon, it's legal to water a ½ acre garden for personal use or use up to 5,000 gallons a day for a commercial activity—but if you grow food or farm products to sell, that same use becomes illegal. That doesn't make sense. Why is it okay to water a garden for yourself, but the minute you sell one zucchini, you're breaking the law?

We're not talking about industrial-scale agriculture here. We're talking about small farmers, market growers, and people trying to feed their communities. Farming even a ½ acre takes real effort—nobody's getting rich off of this. But with clear, limited water access, people could grow meaningful amounts of food and make a small living while helping meet local needs.

HB 3372 is a practical, commonsense solution. It puts small-scale, community-focused food production on the same footing as other legal water uses. It's not going to break the system, but it will help bring fresh, local food back into reach for more Oregonians.

Please support HB 3372 and give communities the ability to grow and share food legally.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Jim Abeles
Co-Owner
Topaz Farm