

Submitter: Anna Wiley

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 Anna Wiley and I am a farmer and community member from Cave Junction in Southern Oregon. I am writing today to support 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. It is shortsighted to allow homeowners to utilize as much water as they want to maintain a perfect, green lawn but to disallow small-scale farmers to sell healthy food for their communities.

This personally impacts me for 2 main reasons: first, I am a farmer and although the land I grow on is lucky enough to have a dedicated agricultural well, many of my peers do not enjoy such privilege. With the rising food and land ownership costs, it's important that the State of Oregon does everything in its power to support small farm producers, including allowing small-scale farmers utilizing residential wells to sell their bounty to their community. Additionally, living in a small, impoverished, rural community with limited access to fresh produce, it's important that our community is able to have the autonomy to care for itself through the growing and selling of these foods. Without the dedication of our small-scale, family farmers, my community would not have access to fresh locally grown produce. Instead of a restriction on water usage, I encourage you to consider alternatives such as bolstering dry-farming or water retention education, providing incentives for reduced-tillage and mulching activities, and rewarding those who are already implementing water-wise farming practices. Putting restrictions on small farmers will do nothing but negatively impact the health of small, rural communities and punish those who put their heart and soul into growing food for their communities.

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,

Anna Wiley

Dirtfolk Farm, LLC
Cave Junction, OR