

04/05/25

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

From: Dr Athena Paradise, Chiropractic Physician and Community member

My name is Dr. Athena Paradise and I am a Physician, Small Farm Member, Community member from Cloverdale, OR. 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. Why is it legal to use the water for personal use, but selling produce from my garden would mean I was breaking the law?

This personally impacts me because: People in my community and practice are hungry, and we have to drive a minimum of 25 minutes to get groceries at a store. Due to the outdated law farmers market providers have been shut down and our community is suffering that loss. Many people depend on the weekly local food supply that was available at the Farmers Market, including me and my family, and many of my patients. PLEASE I am asking with all my heart that you change the law and allow small farms to produce food for their communities.

- We were providing lettuce, greens, root vegetables for our community —maybe 75 people.
- We were using less than 200 gallons a week with no negative influences occurring.
- Being able to irrigate less than 1/2 an acre would mean we could produce enough food to feed our community, getting real organic produce to many families in this area.
- Community members are desperate for this food and access.
- There are less than HALF the vendors in the last 2 years since this law began being enforced.
- We have been severely impacted by this loss of farmers (2 farms shut down completely) and therefor this loss of food easily available.
- Having small farms in our area means that we have sustainable supply that is easily available. It means that Farmers Markets have the vendors to make them successful and to reach out to more and more community members. It means people can find affordable accessible food to put on their tables for their families.

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,

Dr Athena Paradise
Heart In Hand
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