

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 Kristine Woolhouse. I am a Farmer from Dorena 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. I have been selling at local farmers markets for more than 24 years and I have seen fellow farmers lose their businesses and ability to provide fresh produce to our local community.

I am fortunate to have irrigation rights on my farm. I am submitting this testimony to support my fellow small farmers. Food security will always be a priority for any region. Allowing the smaller farmer to produce and sell from a ½ acre plot for food security is a win win for all of us- for the producers and customers. Access to healthy fresh food is especially important in our rural areas where access to fresh local produce is scarce.

My closest market in Cottage Grove Oregon has seen a leap in foot traffic in the past 2 years. Customers are hungry for local fresh produce. As a fellow farmer and customer I spend my dollars at the local market which helps the local economy thrive. HB 3372 would help keep our community economy healthy and enhance healthy food choices for our people.

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,

Kristine Woolhouse

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