

My name is Shantha Vedantam, and I am a community member from Hillsboro, OR. I am writing today to support HB 3372-5.

This personally impacts me because to me it is a privilege to know where my food comes from and who grows my food. Small scale farming is a beautiful way in which we can come closer to the land that sustains us through food. It helps to build a relationship with nature. Whenever I visit local farms and shop at farmer markets, as a parent, I get to reinforce (and role-model) to my five-year-old kid that it is how we are taking care of acknowledging our relationship and gratitude to our soil (*humus*).

Beside this spiritual side, I cherish the access to small farmers and their produce, I cherish because I get culturally relevant produce that our forefathers consumed. The very fact that the food harvested comes to me without any packaging plastic and carbon footprint is hugely satisfying. Also, I am proud of the economic cycle that I have become a part of when I shop at local farmers market.

This country is blessed with so many natural resources. Small farms, tilling less than an acre, are a wonderful means through which we take minimal from nature. By sharing it with community, these farms help consumers like me to integrate ourselves into the local ecosystem and economy.

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. The solution in this bill does not increase the overall water available for exempt use, it simply allows people to sell the food and farm products it is already legal to grow. Give communities back the ability to feed and provide for themselves, pass HB 3372-5.

Thank you,

Shantha Vedantam