

Submitter: Lindsay Goldberg

On Behalf Of:

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

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3372

My name is Lindsay Goldberg and I am a farmer from Troutdale. 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 a single zucchini from my garden would mean I was breaking the law?

I have owned and operated a cut flower farm for the past 11 years out of the Gresham/Troutdale area. I was also a participant of Headwaters Incubator Farm Program so I am in community with vegetable growers and flower growers. Many of my friends and neighbors operate entire farm businesses on about a half acre. This is actually a pretty standard size for a cut flower business. These growers have established businesses, employ local people, and sell directly to our community. They add vital beauty and pollinator habitat to our world. Until recently, they have been operating under the assumption that they could use their well water to irrigate their crops. Then we started hearing stories of the enforcement of a 70 year old law. Many are now terrified they will lose the ability to operate their businesses.

I believe allowing people to irrigate commercial crops by a domestic well should absolutely be allowed. If well owners can currently fill a swimming pool or water their lawns, why wouldn't we allow farmers to make a livelihood from this same water? Farmland ownership/access is already out of reach for most people who feel called to do this work. While I do not currently own land, I am hopeful that this will one day be my future. When I do, I will want to use my well to irrigate my crops. Let's take away this barrier for people in our agricultural community and make it easier and more accessible for them to feed their neighbors. These are the farmer's market vendors you know and love.

Thank you for your support of HB3372!

Sincerely,  
Lindsay Goldberg  
Fawn Lily Farm