

10/12/2020

Dear Honorable Supervisors,

We write today in support of the MCA & the CCAG memos submitted on all items for this special meeting in hope there is a way to find common ground. Whether we are talking about Phase 1 or Phase 3 cannabis regulation, you must create a logical legal pathway for the very people who you want in the industry. Mendocino is not Monterey or Santa Barbara or even Lake County, we are unique, in a good way.

Phase 1 applicants are still here in limbo wondering when & how to receive approval for an annual license. The County Supervisors & Staff have stated they are not standing in our way. But as a 10, 000 sq foot outdoor farm who has held a County permit for 3+ years & a Provisional State License for nearly as long, we are still waiting for YOU to figure out the MND / CEQA / Appendix. G... Phase 3 is important, but please, 1st get clarity for Phase 1. Let people already in the industry know what you need from them. This county has been fighting alongside us for small farms with sensible environmental standards for many years, you can't give up on us now. It is simple question about a complicated situation. What is the path forward is for Phase 1?! Phase 1 needs to be the priority!

Resource lands are the mountains that are historically the backbone of the finest cannabis in California. In many ways it's a perfect zone for the small regenerative farm to thrive, & when necessary, to remediate through conscious cultivation practices what has been over-forested by logging companies & overgrazed by livestock. Legal cannabis farms are very limited in size in our county, even if we were double the existing size of each farm (which is the best option for expansion, as long as it doesn't create further CEQA issues). Legal cannabis farms are inspected by more than 10 different county & state agencies, to insure they are not harming the environment. So, how does it make sense when wine grapes, cattle, timber production, historically & happening right now on resource lands have been shown to cause environmental degradation far above and beyond what would ever happen on a regenerative cannabis farm.

Cannabis as a crop on Ag land has had problems passing the stringent cannabis product testing due previous pesticide use that may be allowed on other crops but are not allowed in the cannabis industry on that same Ag land parcel. This has been the case in Monterey, Santa Barbara, etc. That, & there is a real possibility of problems for cannabis even with pesticide use spraying on nearby Ag lands from drift. We just heard you last week say you want to allow hemp to grow in ANY zone, so why limit cannabis. It's the same plant! Yes, cannabis is powerful a medicine, it is also a plant, an agricultural crop. This county has a true stake in the history of what is rapidly becoming the next big thing. Everyone wants in! But those same mom & pop small farms, mainly located on resource lands, who built this industry are known locally & globally as pioneers who should be an integral part of future.

We recently watched the new “Kiss the ground” film on Netflix. It was food themed but the sustainable practices are the same as the hallmark of the Mendocino sun-grown cannabis community & the larger organic back-to-the-land mentality that has guided our county codes & ethics for a very long time... including small farms, with emphasis on non-gmo, organic & biodynamic principles, regenerative & permaculture practices, clean herbal medicine, biodiversity, etc. The UN also studied & declared the world needed to save the food systems by utilizing healthier growing methods & local reliance. No more mono-cropping, we know it doesn't work. Farm animals & fruits & vegetable can coexist on cannabis farms, in fact, they should & they already do. Rangeland & other Resource lands should not seem so problematic. That is the point, to bring the farm & ranch back together. Now, these seemingly simple but sustainable ideas could be the KISS (Keep it simple sweetie) answer to drawdown the carbon into the ground & turn back the clock on climate change... cannabis farms in Resource lands are a perfect remedy. That is a solution that sounds more like the aligned soul-ution of & for Mendocino County. Global cooling is a win for the whole world!

Thank you, Laura & Marty Clein