

Mendocino County finds itself in a lose-lose situation regarding cannabis policy. This needs to be addressed before anything else further is done. We have unworkable rules for cannabis producers who want to be legal, and an environment that attracts outlaws to come and grow cannabis for the illegal out of state market. The black market operates with impunity because of no code, or law enforcement. This out of state black market is about 90% of the cannabis market here in our county. It is safe to assume many of those in the process of getting permits are also making money in this black market since the California market for legal Cannabis was oversupplied 3 years ago, and likely still is today. Our rural residents and lands are paying the big price. Making the county rules more user friendly does not change the lawless environment we have created here, and the motivation to grow for the more profitable out of state black market. The growers coming here have no intention of complying with a law, and are not here to grow for the California legal market. So why the urgency to open up range lands for cannabis? Unless something changes with code enforcement we have to assume the black market will move in, and the county will not enforce their own rules. What the blackmarket is doing is not agriculture.

In 2017 Mendocino County was among the top ten counties in California for the rate of violent crime, and Ukiah was in the top 5 for cities in the state.(from Wikipedia) My guess is, with what I have seen in the news lately the violent crime rate, and rank has not gone down, and likely has gone up. Our homeless policy appears to be one source of our high violent crime rate, but so is our lack of cannabis code enforcement. People come from all over the world to grow cannabis here for big profits in the black market, because they know they can get away with it. With the black market comes violent crime. How much of this violent crime is never reported we don't know, but it can be assume that much of isn't. I will defer to our county sheriff for needed corrections for anything that I have said here.

I am making these pointed comments as president of Mendocino County Farm Bureau, because I felt our executive director's letter which I approved and signed did not say some things that only I should say directly, It appears to me that our county cannabis policy is existing in a fantasy world that needs a reality check. Mendocino County Farm Bureau is here to help, and make Mendocino County a place for legitimate agriculture, and that includes the legal growing of cannabis.

Thanks for your time reading this, and thanks for your efforts.

George Hollister, President of Mendocino County Farm Bureau