

Dear Supervisors,

I am writing to you in an effort to provide a perspective you may not have heard. I was born and raised in Potter Valley. I am the District Sales Manager for Grow West, Organics located on El Roble Road, south of Ukiah. I have been engaged in agricultural activities, product sales and consulting for twenty years.

I have specialized in organic products in recent years in the Ukiah area, assisting clients in all areas of crop production including cannabis. It is the unique group of permitted cannabis cultivators I wish to illustrate for you.

In my experience, there are no more dedicated and conscientious farmers than those engaged in regulated cannabis production. They are passionate about the health and well being of not only their plants but also the environment. For the most part, they don't use anything but organic products and amendments. Most cultivators discuss their challenges with me, many of which stem from local compliance issues that have little to do with sustainable agriculture and more to do with politics.

Currently there is a significant amount of misinformation from County officials about licensed cultivators presenting the same environmental and enforcement problems as illegal growers. I can attest that my legal clients are not part of environmental degradation.

I have visited many cannabis farms in the area and seen firsthand the comparison between large cultivations and small craft farms in Mendocino County. There is no comparison between the high-quality flowers grown here and the mediocre plants grow with big Ag practices on large cultivations. No comparison! Mendocino County has a treasure in the small cannabis farms' products that you must not ignore, but rather support. The flower quality I see from small Mendocino farms is worth protecting and you, the County leadership must make this happen.

What a colossal mistake it will be to approve large expansion of cannabis cultivation in Mendocino County. Large grows here will be no different from large grows anywhere. They will produce mediocre quality plants and flowers; they will present economical but environmentally questionable practices and they will dilute Mendocino's reputation of superlative quality cannabis. I can't believe this is what leadership wants repeated here as it has been throughout California.

If, however, you are courted by the interests of corporate Ag (yes, some of my clients) and unwittingly convinced that large grows can be eminently beneficial to the County, I strongly advise you to separate quality from quantity in your permitting system. Craft, compliant, legal farmers need your protection to continue their small businesses as well as the heritage they represent. Small farmers are the heartbeat of cannabis in Mendocino County. I know, I've seen, and I support the high standards they bring to their craft, their products and historical genetics to Mendocino County.

Make no mistake, I sell products to all kinds of growers, but small cannabis farmers in Mendocino County have inspired me to reconsider conventional Ag products and practices where cannabis is concerned. I sincerely believe that supporting the craft cannabis farmers, specifically, and distinct from large scale grows will only bring opportunities to the County in the form of continued revenue,



tourist interest (you can see a warehouse grow anywhere) and continue Mendocino's high quality flower reputation.

Thank you for your consideration. Please understand the specialty of small cannabis producers in Mendocino County and include their protection in new ordinances governing the evolving cannabis industry.

Sincerely,

John Hildebrand

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "John Hildebrand".

District Sale Manager

Grow West, Organics