

Dear Board of Supervisors,

I am a cultivator going through the permitting process. There has been a steep learning curve in how to create and navigate a workable permitting process. Let's learn from Phase 1 and be careful about how Phase 3 is implemented. I support the CCAG memo's recommendations. I also support the MCA memo. I believe Mendocino can have a productive and profitable cannabis program if we all work together to be sure that it makes sense.

I want to address a few of the many reasons that large scale expansion does not make sense at this time. This is the increased pressure from pests and pollen drift. In the years that I have been cultivating, I have witnessed a dramatic increase in pest pressure as more and more cannabis is being cultivated in Mendocino. The most difficult pests to control are microscopic mites that target cannabis. Even the most experienced cultivators are challenged to detect them in time to be able to keep them in check. If they are not detected early, they can destroy an entire garden. And then they will move on to neighboring farms.

We are limited in what we can use to treat pests, because we have to be certain that the end product will test clean. Pest management is a very real and necessary component to successful cannabis cultivation. Let's take care of our county and the cannabis grown here by ensuring that cultivation is done on a reasonable scale that allows for adequate oversight.

Pollen drift also requires vigilance. Of course cultivators can use clones or feminized seed, and even careful selection of female plants. But it is the natural state of cannabis to produce male flowers on female plants to ensure pollination. Over many many years, breeding has attempted to get rid of this tendency. But all cultivators know that a male flower can appear at any time on any female plant. It takes time and careful monitoring by experienced eyes to catch the male flowers before they open and spread pollen.

Once pollinated, the flowers lose almost all value. Seeded flowers are difficult to sell even on the extract market. The seeds need to be removed before extraction, so fresh frozen is not an option. Large scale farms counting on selling product without having to dry and cure the flowers would be without options. And any neighboring farms within 10 miles could lose all value to their finished flowers from pollen drift. How would this be managed? Would the farm that pollinated its neighbors' farms be liable for the value of their crops that year? Once again, it is clear that cultivation must be done on a scale that allows for adequate oversight. Please vote against the 10% expansion.

We are at a historical moment in the path of legalizing cannabis. What direction will Mendocino take? Will we try to keep up with other counties in terms of quantity of production? Or will we focus on quality, so that we stand out and qualify county wide as an appellation that grows unique, high quality cannabis? I believe a focus on quality will bring the most prosperity across our county.

Thank you so much for listening to the concerns that we are bringing forth as cultivators. Again, I believe that if we all work together, we can create a cannabis program that works for all of us.

Thank you,

Ya Reinier