

Dear Ms. Bean,

I have lived in Southern California all my life. I grew up in Hemet Valley and my Aunt Vern and Uncle George had a small farm that provided many families in the area with citrus, grapes, walnuts and stone fruit. Now, most of these small family farms are gone. I have lived in San Diego for over 30 years. I have seen in the past 10 years a resurgence of small family farms or urban plantations. These urban plantations provide fresh local and organic produce to many. I make a point to shop at my local farmer's market for personal use and for produce of my cafe. I support our local Farmers. Please do not classify San Diego County as Urban Landscape. Historically, San Diego County is agriculture...and it is now too!

In his April 1st call for statewide water use reductions and in comments since, Governor Brown stated that the mandatory program of restrictions was not directed at agriculture. It has now been learned the proposed conservation framework considers farming in San Diego County to be part of the urban landscape and subject to the same restrictions designed to curb excessive landscape irrigation. This provision will create undue harm to farmers in San Diego County who are just as important as farmers in other parts of the state. The conservation framework should exclude all agriculture as Governor Brown promised, regardless of location.

All water users in San Diego County have made heavy investments in a system that includes a variety of water sources. That investment has been so high as to force many local farmers out of business and idle thousands of acres of productive farmland. This investment was done intentionally based on lessons from previous droughts with the aim of lessening the impacts of future droughts. This exact strategy was promoted by Governor Brown last year when he called for increased regional self-reliance. San Diego County not only heeded that call, but we were practicing it long before the governor's proclamation. To now say those efforts cannot be used to mitigate the impacts of this drought is a powerful disincentive to make future investments in local water supplies.

Farmers in San Diego County are no less concerned about the ongoing drought as are other Californians. Please consider and act on these comments as a matter of fairness.

Sincerely,

Joanne Sherif, owner
Cardamom Cafe and Bakery
2977 Upas St.
San Diego, CA 92104
760-613-2040 cell