

Dear Ms. Bean,

We are hearing that the proposed conservation framework considers all of San Diego County to be part of the urban landscape, ignoring the 1200 or so active farms in our county, and thus subject to the restrictions designed to curb excessive landscape irrigation. I would like to register my protest of that designation.

Governor Brown seemed clear in his April 1st call for statewide reductions in water use that the mandatory program of restrictions was not directed at agriculture, presumably since farmers' allocations have been cut already under other programs. Food production certainly is not the place to start with water restrictions; all other discretionary uses should be addressed first.

Considering our farmers part of the urban landscape will create undue harm in San Diego County. Agriculture is a very important part of our local economy and provides food to our area. 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. Our local community had made investments 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.

Reduced allocations and rising water prices have already forced many local farmers out of business and idled thousands of acres of productive farmland. Countless avocado and citrus trees have been stumped. Farmers in San Diego County are concerned about the ongoing drought, as are all Californians, and continue to make changes in order to best use the water allocated.

Please take San Diego agricultural producers into account when you determine fair allocation of resources.

Sincerely,

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