

Dear Ms. Bean,

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. My family has been farming citrus, dry farm hay, and grapes in San Diego County since 1946. We are a 11th generation farm family. This is not a hobby or urban landscape. With the demise of our wells in 2014 we needed to buy some supplemental district water to get through last summer. The wells are running very low on water again this year and we will need to purchase even more district water. But now are told we have to cut back 35%. We do not have 35% to cut back. We have already removed 20 acres of citrus over the last 2 years and have another 6 slotted to be removed this year. That property is now bare with no water to plant anything but we still have the obligation to pay property tax with no crop income coming in like many other farmers in this state. This also creates the loss of jobs. The snowball effect doesn't seem to be considered by state officials. As we drive through the cities and towns with all the parkways and lawns with water running down sidewalks and streets, we wonder where common sense has gone. As farmers and stewards of land we are always aware of water issues and have been very drought conservative for the last 4 years. Citrus is not a crop that you just don't irrigate until we have water supplies again.

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,

The Broomell Family
15402 Vesper Road
Valley Center, CA 92082