

Dear Ms. Bean

My name is Oliver Storm and I am the co owner and operator of Weidners Gardens in Encinitas, California. Weidners Gardens is a long-standing well known nursery in the north county area. 2.5 years ago the original owner, Evelyn Weidner retired and sold the business to my business partner Kalim Owens and I. We are both long-term employees of the organization.

Weidners Gardens has worked in the past years very hard and efficient on improving on our water systems to irrigate the plants. We have implemented drip irrigation and puls irrigation timers. All systems are automatically controlled so no excessive water is used for the plants.

San Diego county has a zero run off policy that was implemented several years ago. That rule changed how growers used the water in the nursery.

The mandated water reduction in San Diego county would result in direct reduction of our crops.

I do not understand that the San Diego grower community is not included in the exemption. We have done so much in the last years to be more efficient with our water use. We are getting punished today for having done the right thing yesterday. It should not be a disadvantage to anybody to be proactive. But at this point, that is what happens to us.

We are not going to have a choice but to release part of our labor force to compensate for the reduced income. If you are asking for 35% water reduction that would mean we have to lay off 1/3 of our employees. Growers invest a lot of money into their crops before they see the revenue. If we have to reduce the water now, it would mean that we have to choose crops and turn off the water. That would result in direct revenue losses. This can be a serious business thread. As I mentioned before we only have operated the business for 2.5 years. We are still in the building stage of financial stability. This act might very well force us out of business.

Please reconsider the decision. We are not looking for special treatment; we just want to be treated as the rest of the agriculture community in California. That is what governor Brown stated.

Sincerely,

Oliver Storm

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Oliver Storm

Weidners Gardens

695 Normandy Road

Encinitas, CA 92024

Office:760-436-5326

Fax:7604363681