

Dear Gentlemen,

We are certified organic date farmers in the Bard Valley and Coachella Valley have been farming since 1983. We package and market our medjool date production in Calif. /AZ. In addition, since 1953, my family business packages lemon and lime juice that is marketed to food service, retail and food manufactures.

By the year 2030 I would want to see California be a bigger bread basket. California should be supplying the US market and exporting to more foreign countries, feeding people high quality, affordable and safe food. More than any country in the world the US represents freedom and it is important that California agriculture increases production so no other country can restrict the U.S. food supply.

It is important that Agriculture is made profitable and kept independent from government intrusion. With the highest U.S. labor costs, business restrictions, lawsuits and recent runaway fuel expenses this is made very difficult. The California legislature continually passes laws that hurt businesses and agriculture.

If the situation does not turn around and be profitable for farms, food production will continue declining and the US will be reliant on foreign food production. More of our foods are being produced outside the US where we have no control of quality or safety.

The situation is similar to oil production: Just as we are relying on foreign produced oil now, we will be relying on foreign produced food in the future. This is a big threat and it needs to be prevented now. The legislature must resend their business killing laws; reduce minimum wages and environmental restrictions. We do not want subsidies, just get government out of the way and let agriculture and market forces grow food.

Sincerely,

Chris Nielsen

Winterhaven Ranch, Oasis Date Gardens, Nielsen Citrus Products