

Subject: Support for Ag Processing Amendments – Vote Yes on June 4

Dear Matt LaVere,

As a member of VC CoLAB, I am writing to express my strong support for the proposed amendments to the Ventura County General Plan Economic Vitality Element and Articles 5 and 7 of the Ventura County Non-Coastal Zoning Ordinance.

This proposal, which will be voted on at the June 4 Board of Supervisors meeting, is critical for the continued economic viability of our local agriculture industry. A "Yes" vote on these amendments will increase opportunities for Ventura County farmers and ranchers by:

- Keeping locally grown crops in the county that would otherwise be transported elsewhere for processing
- Creating an environment that encourages the production of specialty or high-value crops, including specialized animal facilities and rearing methods for local food processing
- Increasing our local food security
- Enhancing relationships with local agricultural producers and other county businesses, including restaurants, markets, hospitals, food banks, schools, and more
- Reducing the environmental impact of shipping products outside the county

While I am optimistic about this project, I have a few concerns that I hope will be addressed:

- The January 1, 2030 deadline (a SOAR provision) poses challenges for producers regarding the permitting process. An extension of the deadline or streamlining the process to ensure permit applications are reviewed within 12 months would be beneficial.
- The 12-acre total is very limiting. Allowing landowners with existing outbuildings (including those of historical significance) to convert them to processing facilities without counting towards the countywide 12-acre total would be advantageous.
- The final determination of unsuitable land for cultivation should be made by the Agricultural Commissioner rather than multiple agencies.
- Flexibility should be added to the proposed absolute prohibition of native vegetation removal. I urge you to vote in favor of these amendments to help secure a prosperous future for Ventura County's agriculture.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Best regards,



Mary Vanoni