

## For Mark Lovelace, It's All About Money

Mark Lovelace's letter of January 31 is remarkable in one respect – he is concerned only with money. The environment seems to be farther down on his list of priorities. Streams going dry, nutrient pollution that feeds toxic algae, light pollution that has negative effects on wildlife, air and noise pollution from generators, disintegrating plastic greenhouse covers that end up in our waterways and eventually our bodies, fragmentation of habitat – these are not mentioned in his letter.

He has no sympathy for the unfortunate neighbors of large grows- the noise, increased traffic on rural roads, the greenhouse lights that make the stars disappear. For Mark, it's all about money.

His letter implies that to compete on a state-wide level, Humboldt's cannabis industry must go big – very big. Other places in California have grows that are a hundred thousand or a million square feet, or even 2.5 million square feet, with multiple licenses held by one company. Is this what's best for Humboldt County?

CalPoly hosted a forum about Measure A on February 1 that was well attended by cannabis farmers. A spokesperson for the Humboldt County Growers Alliance admitted that Humboldt can compete only on quality, not volume. Most of the farmers in the room said they embrace the idea of appellation and intend to farm accordingly.

The California Department of Food and Agriculture had developed regulations for the Cannabis Appellation Program. These are the requirements to qualify: cannabis must be planted in the ground in the canopy area; cultivated without the use of structures including a greenhouse, hoop house, glasshouse, conservatory, hothouse, or any similar structure covering the plant or modifying the natural light received by the plant in the canopy area; and cultivated without any artificial light in the canopy area.

These requirements overlap with the provisions of Measure A. Contrary to Mark's opinion, Measure A would not deal a devastating blow to small cannabis businesses – in fact it supports them. Large businesses would not qualify under the Appellation Program, which is the only viable option for small farmers to compete.

Since Measure A promotes the environmentally friendly practices that many small farmers already employ, one has to wonder about the source of the opposition and the disinformation campaign that has confused discussions about it. Mark's letter makes it clear– follow the money.

Vote Yes on Measure A.

*Diane Higgins*