

D. Berardinis Winery
220 Main Street
Polson, Montana
406-270-9406

Mr Chairmain and Members of the Committee,

My name is Dana Berardinis, I own and operate D. Berardinis Winery in Polson. I use 100% Montana grown grapes and fruits to make locally grown wines. Years ago, I developed a passion for using local fruit to make wine which grew into licensing my own winery in 2013 in Polson, Montana at 220 Main Street.

I support small farmers and grape growers in Mission Valley and Flathead Valley by purchasing their fruit and grapes in large quantities each season. I make my wine in a very traditional way, crushing the fruit and fermenting it on the skins. I then press and barrel age my wines for 10 months to 2 years. My wines are made in small batches and are handcrafted. I take pride in the fact that all the fruit I use to make my wines are hand harvested and locally grown in Montana.

My winery and tasting room are on Main Street in Polson and my tasting room is open for tastings on Friday's during the Polson Farmers Market which takes place across the street. I promote to the farmers market crowd that my wines are all locally grown. About 30% of my tasting room sales are from the farmers market crowd, so I know how important farmers markets are in establishing and growing your customer base with MT grown wine. I would really support allowing MT grown wine at farmers markets. I have always wanted to expand my sales and visibility at the Missoula Farmers Market and Whitefish Farmers Market to really promote my wines to customers looking for Montana grown products and produce. I really feel Montana grown wines are an excellent example of what Montana farmers are growing here. Montana grown wines give people a true taste of Montana.

I can see how both farmers market access and farm winery legislation overall would help incentivize vineyards. Finding grapes to purchase is a real challenge, this helps increase the supply of MT grown. By participating in the actual farmers market, I would be more likely to meet farmers and potential grape growers which would benefit us both.

Thank you for taking the time to read my statement.

Sincerely,

Dana Berardinis

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