

RESOLUTION NUMBER: 6616-2024

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SEBASTOPOL OPPOSING MEASURE J AND AFFIRMING SUPPORT OF AGRICULTURAL OPERATIONS AND RELATED BUSINESSES IN SONOMA COUNTY

WHEREAS, the Sebastopol City Council opposes the proposed County Prohibition on Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs) measure, also known as Measure J, put forward by Direct Action Everywhere (DXE), an animal rights organization based in Berkeley, CA; and

WHEREAS, while Measure J may be well-intentioned, its unintended consequences are far too great; and

WHEREAS, if Measure J passes, according to Sonoma County's own independent analysis, there would be significant job losses, with a ripple effect causing the loss of one additional job in the Sonoma County economy for every job lost in the agriculture community; and

WHEREAS, Measure J would devastate many of our local organic and sustainable brands, such as Petaluma based Clover Sonoma, Straus Family Creamery, and Rosie and Rocky the Free-Range Chickens, costing hundreds, if not thousands, of jobs; and

WHEREAS, Measure J threatens to increase greenhouse gas emissions by necessitating the transportation of food products from far distant locations, thereby increasing the cost of poultry and dairy products during a time of already rising inflation, further straining families' budgets; and

WHEREAS, Sebastopol residents have supported a thriving local downtown Farm Market since 1990, supporting farm to table practices; and Sebastopol is the hub for many Sonoma County family farmers who live in West County including dairies, sheep and chicken ranchers who themselves shop local and support Sebastopol economy; and

WHEREAS, Measure J will undermine our food security, jeopardize existing fire breaks, damage our local economy, eliminate carbon sequestration opportunities, and impose an unfunded mandate on government services while costing tax payers millions of dollars; and

WHEREAS, Measure J will impact our local High School Ag program where many young adults take Ag Science on the CTE education path in lieu of traditional Science classes, and raise animals for the local fairs by participating in 4-H or FFA programs, and raising their animals on local farms who would be impacted or could be forced out of business if Measure J passed; and

WHEREAS, Sonoma County is proud to have a history of producing world-class agricultural products and stands with family farmers, brands, and entrepreneurs who continue this tradition today; and

WHEREAS, Animal agriculture is important to preserving natural landscape and open space we all enjoy; and

WHEREAS, Agriculture is an economic engine for our community, and it is essential to protect our agricultural heritage and access to sustainably produced products that our community buys local.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Sebastopol City Council opposes Measure J and urges a "No" vote on Measure J to safeguard our local economy, environment, and agricultural heritage.


The above and foregoing Resolution was duly passed, approved, and adopted at a meeting by the City Council on the 17th day of September, 2024, by the following vote:

VOTE:

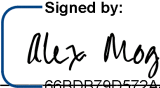
Ayes: Councilmembers Hinton, McLewis and Mayor Rich
Noes: Councilmember Maurer and Vice Mayor Zollman
Absent: None
Abstain: None

APPROVED:  Signed by:

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Mayor Diana Gardner Rich

ATTEST:  DocuSigned by:

44C0774260FE430
Mary Gourley, Assistant City Manager/City Clerk, MMC

APPROVED AS TO FORM:  Signed by:

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Alex Mog, City Attorney