

My name is Zachary Lizee and I am the owner/operator of a Tier 1 cannabis cultivation business located in Orange, Vermont and this is regarding the current structure of the legal cannabis laws in the state of Vermont. I want to make my concerns known that the burgeoning cannabis industry is facing hardships, especially small producers (really farmers) with the current regulatory schema.

Before starting our licensed cannabis farm, my wife and I owned and operated a certified organic farm in East Jamaica, Vermont in Windham County. In 2020 right as the Covid issue hit our state, my wife had a serious car accident while working at the farm and suffered a traumatic brain injury which caused us to have to quit farming. The farm is mostly fallow now and we scrape by leasing the fields to a local farmer for feed cultivation.

I chose to start a new "farm" business in 2022 in Orange, Vermont and obtained a Tier 1 cannabis cultivation license. Since starting the business, we smaller farmers/producers are experiencing serious headwinds affecting if and how we will survive with the current Vermont state's cannabis regulatory policies.

Many small/craft producers are struggling to make ends meet and find that having to only sell our products to the approved retailers seriously handicaps our ability to generate enough profit to remain viable. In other states, like neighboring New York, Massachusetts, and Maine producers are allowed to utilize "farmer's markets" or other sanctioned cannabis events to have direct sales to consumers, which allows for customer education and brand loyalty to be developed, helping the producer gain more valuable market share in a very competitive market.

The current lack of attention to the many failing small cannabis producers in the state of Vermont is at a minimum troubling. Many small producers such as myself are struggling to stay afloat. If change is not made soon, many of us will be financially insolvent and in my case, another failing farmer will drown in debt due to the lack of attention given to this and other pertinent matters.

Please consider supporting direct cannabis sales from producers to consumers in Vermont.

Sincerely,



Zachary M. Lizee

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