

Honourable Mayor and Council Members,

I would like this submission to be part of the public record.

Myself and my family started our farming operation over 50 years ago with the goal to provide the London area with quality fruit and vegetables. Over the years we have faced many struggles such as unsuitable weather, invasive pests and plant viruses brought in with 'certified' plants purchased in good faith to be virus free. As a farmer, we roll with the punches but it does have a toll on our financial and personal well being.

It has been a goal of our family to provide the safest and best quality berries possible. We focus on plant nutrition and have made great strides in reducing the pesticide applications applied by making sure that the plants are at optimum health. This requires a lot of time and expense and much manual labour.

Strawberries require crop rotation. Once a patch is retired, the land has to be used for other purposes for 3-5 years before strawberry plants are put planted in the same area again. Because of this, we require a large parcel of usable land for berries.

Should the proposed Zoning request be allowed, a large parcel of our land would become unusable for berry crop production. We could not, in good conscience plant berries in a field right beside an operational slaughterhouse or animal yard. Our land borders 8076 Longwoods on 2 sides. The spread of disease or ecoli onto our fruit could not be permitted. First thing in the spring EVERY year, the Ministry of Agriculture takes samples of our fruit to test for contamination.

The operation of a slaughterhouse or the keeping of animals on 8076 Longwoods Road will have a direct and negative effect on the operation of our 3rd generation family farm. I do not understand how rezoning that property is a good thing when it will make much of a successful farming operation's land unusable for the very purpose in which that farm exists???

Our business supplies thousands of Londoners and we employ ALL local workers on our farm. What happens on our farm affects far more than just our family. This would be a direct impediment to our primary goal of providing the safest, best quality fruit possible to our very loyal customers, with the least amount of pesticides applied.

I trust that council will make the right decision.

Bill & Sylvia Millar

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