

## Teri Blankinship

Chelsea, I am writing to you from a small farm in rural Thurston County. My husband and I are simply living out our retirement on a beautiful piece of property with our cows, chickens and sheep. It is doubtful, with the current prices of feed, hay, alfalfa and slaughtering costs, that we make any money at all. But what we do do is provide local families with eggs that they can rest assured are as wholesome as they can be. We raise grass fed beef that local families can see on a day to day basis and know that they are not being fed anything but local grass hay. Healthy meat for their dinner table. We raise sheep for their wool and for their meat. Again families can see these animals being raised and know that they are treated well and can be comfortable with the product they buy. Wool can be used for so many different purposes. Our flock actually is owned by our 14 year old granddaughter who has raised and shown sheep for the last 12 years. She learning many things by doing this. Many important life lessons by raising these sheep. I am not sure why the Department of Ecology has to get involved with any rancher raising livestock. The cycle of raising any animal is to keep the land in shape. They eat the grass and fertilize it as they go. This has been going on for centuries. I completely oppose the CAFO rules as drafted and agree with the comments of Okanogan, Thurston and Yakima County Farm Bureaus. What you are talking about is taking away the opportunity for local people to help feed local people. Instead of destroying these people's hobbies and livelihoods the Department of Ecology should be educating people and helping them learn how to be better stewards of our lands. Thank you, Teri Blankinship