

Michelle Brigham

Dear Chelsea,

Please know that I am absolutely opposed to this latest endeavor by the DOE to diminish the lifestyle and enjoyment that small farmers and others enjoy and treasure in this area. Why does the agency not respect the efforts of farmers who struggle to raise and harvest the animals they produce locally that help feed their communities? Why are you considering making the efforts of those preserving rural and agricultural landscapes so much more difficult? To think that such a limited view as to require a costly permit to farm just one animal under the proposed CAFO rules as drafted could in some way benefit our community is absurd. Especially when the DOE literally floods our farmlands, forests, prairies, parks, and even our backyards with toxic biosolids. I oppose the CAFO rules as drafted and concur with the comments of Okanogan, Thurston, and Yakima County Farm Bureaus. Ecology needs to work with those who raise livestock on a small scale providing locally sourced food. Please stop dumping highly toxic sludge on our landscapes before trying to introduce rules that will be devastating to local food production and our overall food security.

Instead of regulating, permitting at high cost, and issuing hefty fines for those who can not possibly keep up with this next onslaught of regulations, Ecology needs to encourage participation in such programs as the Voluntary Stewardship Program and local conservation districts that have been proven to protect water quality. Please awaken to the fact that it is duplicitous to make farmers pay when Ecology allows the roughly 400 wastewater treatments plants in this state, that barely treat wastewater, to continue to pollute and poison our food and living environments with their byproducts when there are technologies available that could eliminate this serious health concern for good. Why are the salmon and whales disappearing? Just look at where all the leachates and effluents from landfills and antiquated wastewater treatment processes end up...in our lakes, rivers, creeks, and streams as they make their way to Puget Sound, the Salish Sea, and oceans beyond. It's not our small flocks of chickens or cows that's the problem, it's the stormwater run-off, hospital wastes, industrial and domestic wastes, landfill leachates, and everything else mixed in together through a poorly managed system of waste disposal that is doing such harm.

Sincerely,
Michelle Horkings-Brigham