

# Mike Staples

My name is Mike Staples, and I farm in Synnes and Baker. I am writing in support of the proposed West River Dairy Expansion.

Based on my experience and observations farming a mile away from West River Dairy for 16 years now with my cousin, Riverview Dairy operates with professionalism, integrity, and environmental responsibility. Their facilities are well-maintained, clean, and organized, and the odor is a minimum for the size of the operation.

As someone familiar with agriculture in this region, I recognize that manure management and water use are highly regulated in Minnesota. Riverview strives to follow these regulations, including nutrient management planning, soil testing, proper application rates, and timing based on field conditions. From what I have seen, their mindset is to meet and exceed these standards to ensure responsible stewardship.

The use of manure as a nutrient source has clear benefits for local farms, including improved soil health, increased organic matter and reduced erosion. This supports long-term agricultural sustainability. By adding another facility of this size will increase the need for more acres of silage and hay as well. I see this as a positive for local demand for corn. Obviously will increase the acres needed to put manure on as well. We get a little manure from West River Dairy already and we wish we could get more every year.

Riverview has also been a strong community partner, supporting farmers, creating jobs, maintaining roads, and investing in schools and local programs. Their communication with neighbors and officials reflects their commitment to being a good neighbor.

I understand that this project is undergoing environmental review through the state's established process — one of the most rigorous in the region— and provides adequate oversight for this project. Based on the available data, existing regulations, and Riverview's proven track record, I am confident this project can continue to operate responsibly. I believe the current review process is sufficient and that additional regulatory burdens are unnecessary.

In closing, I respectfully encourage the appropriate agencies to approve the West River Dairy Expansion. This project supports local agriculture, strengthens rural communities, and reflects a responsible approach to environmental stewardship. I also believe that an EIS is not necessary.

Sincerely,  
Mike Staples