

Ministry of Agriculture,
Food and Rural Affairs

Office of the Minister

77 Grenville Street, 11th Floor
Toronto, Ontario M7A 1B3
Tel: 416-326-3074
www.ontario.ca/OMAFRA

Ministère de l'Agriculture, de
l'Alimentation et des Affaires rurales

Bureau du ministre

77, rue Grenville, 11^e étage
Toronto (Ontario) M7A 1B3
Tél. : 416 326-3074
www.ontario.ca/MAAARO



June 5, 2024

Her Worship Andrea Horwath
Mayor
City of Hamilton
andrea.horwath@hamilton.ca

Dear Mayor Horwath:

In response to my previous letter of April 16th, I want to reiterate my original ask that municipalities consider the needs and potential impacts on agriculture when evaluating proposed changes to stormwater or other fees. My ministry is ready to offer any support we can provide to ensure you fully understand the impacts these policies can have.

I was disappointed to learn that your municipality may have mistaken my statements as support, so I want to be clear, proposed policy changes should avoid unintended consequences to agriculture, including disproportionate costs or unfair fee structures. Ontario farmers are already facing complex challenges and should not have to endure additional costs for infrastructure they do not use in the same manner as other businesses.

I previously shared Brant County's proposed Stormwater Utility Program, which will exempt agricultural properties from the new proposed fee. I strongly encourage anyone considering new fee structures to look at examples such as this that have successfully found a balance for municipal needs while recognizing the importance of the agriculture industry. I do not support exploring policy that punishes farmers for keeping Ontarians fed.

If you have not done so already, I encourage you to speak to staff at my ministry who are available to provide guidance on supporting the growth of the agricultural community while balancing broader municipal needs. Please feel free to contact Scott Duff with any questions you may have at (519) 820-3331 or by email at scott.duff@ontario.ca.

.../2



Good things grow in Ontario
À bonne terre, bons produits

Ministry Headquarters: 1 Stone Road West, Guelph, Ontario N1G 4Y2
Bureau principal du ministère: 1, rue Stone ouest, Guelph (Ontario) N1G 4Y2

I hope that your municipality will consider engaging more directly with farmers and greenhouse operators to mitigate any unintended impacts new charges may have. It is imperative that municipalities and the agricultural industry work together to ensure the economic prosperity of our rural communities now and well into the future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Lisa M. Thompson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Lisa M. Thompson
Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs

c: Scott Duff, Director, Policy Division

Did you know about the Farmers' Wellness Initiative?

- Your mental health is important! If you're a farmer or a member of a farm family and in need of mental health support, please call 1-866-267-6255 and arrange to speak with a professional today.
- For additional resources visit: <https://farmerwellnessinitiative.ca/>.