

WOOD COUNTY

OHIO

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

James F. Carter
Tim W. Brown
Alvin L. Perkins



April 27, 2004

The Honorable Bob Taft, Governor
State of Ohio
77 S. High Street, 30th Floor
Columbus, Ohio 43266-0601

Dear Governor Taft:

We continue to receive letters from citizens of Wood County regarding the apparent proliferation of large dairy facilities in our county. One such dairy is currently operating in Liberty Township (650 cows), land for a second has been purchased in Jackson Township (925 cows), and a third has been proposed near Jerry City (1,500 cows).

In previous letters that we have written to you, our representatives in the state legislature, our Congressional representatives, and the Ohio Department of Agriculture, we have stated the following: "We expect and desire agriculture to remain a significant and very viable component of the Wood County economy in the future. In order to achieve this, it is our belief that we must all work together to ensure that viable agriculture and protected natural resources are viewed as being equally important." We are pleased that Wood County is still very much an agricultural county. However, there are challenges brought about by these large livestock operations on which we must work together.

We have received letters and comments from citizens who are calling on the state to implement a moratorium on large livestock operations. We believe in light of this request, now is the time for the Ohio Department of Agriculture to address the impacts a large livestock operation can have on the water drawn from the ground. How many large livestock operations should be allowed to concentrate in a specific geographic area? Should there be restrictions on the number of operations and their size? Who regulates the amount of water drawn from the ground? Who repays the townships and the county for necessary road repairs if these facilities impact a small geographic area? As you can see, our citizens raise valid questions that ODA should address now.

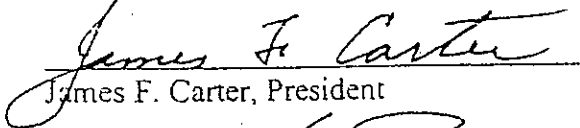
Additionally, there are concerns regarding the storage and land application of liquefied manure that we ask to be addressed by the Ohio Department of Agriculture, especially considering the significant volume of waste produced by 650 to 1,500 cows per facility. These concerns are as follows: 1) The potential for run-off into streams and rivers, and the detrimental effect this could have on public water supplies; 2) The amount of open farm land necessary to adequately accept a large volume of liquefied manure without significant risk of run-off; 3) Due to the fact that Wood County was part of the Great Black Swamp, flat and easily prone to flooding, and subsequently has over 3,000 miles of drainage ditches, there is a very real possibility that liquefied manure will penetrate the soil through cracks in the ground and access streams and rivers directly through buried drainage tiles under the

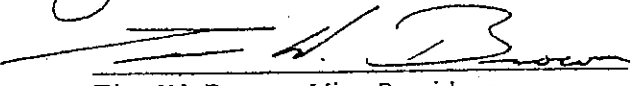
farm land; 4) Concentrating many thousands of gallons of liquefied manure in an open pit and the potential for it to leach into groundwater or cause an environmental disaster if the embankment of the pit should give way, especially during periods of consistent, heavy rainfall.

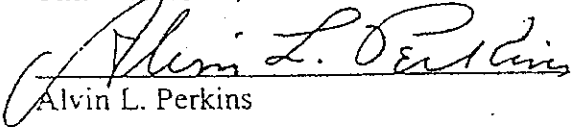
We would be pleased to discuss these issues with you and to participate on any committees that may result in order to bring common sense answers to these concerns. The concerns our citizens have raised are not anti-agriculture. Rather, they are legitimate health and environmental concerns that should be addressed now, before problems arise.

Sincerely,

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS,
WOOD COUNTY, OHIO


James F. Carter, President


Tim W. Brown, Vice President


Alvin L. Perkins

cc: BCC Correspondence file

Large Dairy file

Robert Latta, Ohio State Representative, 77 S. High St., 13th Fl., Columbus, OH 43215-6111

Randy Gardner, Ohio State Senator, Senate Building, Rm. 220, Columbus, OH 43215

Marcy Kaptur, U.S. Representative, 2104 Rayburn House Bldg, Washington, DC 20515-3509

Paul Gillmor, U.S. Representative, 1203 Longworth House Bldg, Washington, DC 20515

Michael DeWine, U.S. Senator, 140 Russell Senate Ofc. Bldg., Washington, DC 20510-3502

George Voinovich, U.S. Senator, 317 Hart Senate Ofc. Bldg., Washington, DC 20510

Larry Long, CCAO Executive Director, 37 W. Broad St., Suite 650, Columbus, OH 43215-4195

Larry Sorrells, WC Health Commissioner, 1840 E. Gypsy Lane Rd., Bowling Green, OH 43402

Jackson Township Trustees, 19981 Railroad, Hoytville, OH 43529

Liberty Township Trustees, 14566 Powell Rd., Portage, OH 43451

Portage Township Trustee, 9408 Bays Rd., Cygnet, OH 43413