

From: [Kevin Engelsma](#)
To: [Jennings, Jonathan \(ECY\)](#)
Subject: New CAFO permit
Date: Friday, October 02, 2015 6:26:57 PM

Dear Director Bellon:

We have heard many times in the last while from some of our farm leaders that you are a reasonable person. That you are not against farming in our state and that you are willing to do what you can to help farmers.

I want to believe this is true as it so important to know we have people in government who have at least some understanding of what we are up against as farmers. But if it is true, it can only be you were on vacation when your Department came out with its draft regulations on the CAFO permit. We can't imagine what these writers were thinking! It is our hope that they have absolutely no understanding of agriculture at all, because if they did have knowledge they must have some sort of a vendetta against us. Not only does much of this permit make absolutely no sense whatsoever for farming in an environmentally friendly way, it will also drive many dairies out of business. The smaller dairy farms (less than 500 cows) will be finished. There is no way someone could comply with all the rules and regulations that come with this permit. I guess your department only wants a few big farms! It kind of seems the person writing the permit took boilerplate language from some big industrial facility or sewage treatment plant and said that will work for farmers too.

Farms and factories are different! Our farms don't look at our manure as waste, but rather as valuable fertilizer. Any farmer who doesn't have this thinking is going to be shortly out of business. If your writers had any understanding of this, any understanding of agriculture, and any understanding of what the true causes of pollution were (all they had to do was look at their own recent data on nitrates and fecal coliform to see this) they would have written a much different permit.

I am hoping my theory on you being on vacation is true and that you will now take a closer look at what your staff presented. We really want to think the best of you, and encourage you for the sake of the state of Washington's environment, its economy, and the future of agriculture to consider completely rewriting this permit with stakeholders present who truly understand how agriculture works.

We are hoping for the best.

Kevin Engelsma Dairy farmer Whatcom county