

**From:** [Lynne Wheeler](#)  
**To:** [Jennings, Jonathan \(ECY\); WSDF@msn.com](#)  
**Subject:** CAFO Permit  
**Date:** Thursday, October 01, 2015 6:21:22 PM

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October 1, 2015

Johnathan Jennings

Washington Department of Ecology

Olympia, WA 98504

Johnathan Jennings,

We began dairy farming in the south fork valley of Whatcom County in 1978. At that time there were close to 900 dairy farms and over 60,000 cows in our county. Whatcom had the highest number of cattle in the state. Today there are roughly a 100 dairies in Whatcom County with under 40,000 cows. The farming industry is challenging and the declining number of farms in our county demonstrates that. We are writing to you to voice our concerns about the new CAFO proposal and the damaging and unnecessary effects it will have on this industry.

This proposal threatens the existence of dairies in Whatcom County. It will cost our farm hundreds of thousands of dollars maybe millions to even try to meet the proposed requirements. The loss of production from setbacks and farm mud puddles, hiring consultants, double lining lagoons, and CAFO permitting will take a devastating financial toll on our farm, and other dairies in this county. Before you destroy a valuable industry and put all the dairies out of business you should consider identifying the real source of nitrates in ground water. There are many contributing sources and there should be extensive testing done to identify these before placing unnecessary and unsupported regulations on farmers.

Dairy farmers have a tremendous impact on this county. Their financial contributions through taxes and employment are significant. The impact will also be felt in the numerous support business; grain companies, implement dealerships, local custom forage operations, dairy supply stores and the list goes on and on. This CAFO proposal will have a detrimental ripple effect throughout Whatcom County.

It's been our experience that regulators are more interested in their agenda than listening to the people their decisions impact. It is our hope that you will hear our concerns.

Jeff Rainey

Coldstream Farms

Deming, WA 98244