

Dear _____ MPP

I am writing to you regarding a matter of great urgency which concerns not only me but hundreds of thousands of other Ontario constituents.

It has come to my attention that, at a time when people across the world are waking up to the benefits of locally-sourced food, the Region of the Municipality of York, Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs have, after decades of harassment, raids and prosecutions filed an application for two injunction orders to potentially criminalize any activity associated with raw milk. These two applications ask the Ontario Court for injunctions to close down the raw milk consumer cooperative running at Glencolton Farms. They were filed under the Health Promotions and Protections Act and the Milk Act.

The injunctions name, not only all the directors of this longstanding private cooperative farm ownership (herd share), but an as yet unestablished list of private citizens, 'John Doe, Jane Doe, Persons Unknown' and the Church of the Christian Community in Canada.

If this injunction is upheld, Ontario's other raw milk farm share, cow share or private membership arrangements must be next. At the point, where no raw milk is available in this Province for private, informed individuals to access, hundreds of thousands of citizens will have had their constitutional rights betrayed and their health and wellbeing put at risk.

You will no doubt be aware of the emergence of the debate over raw milk into the mainstream media, with last month's TVO documentary* and 2016 Raw Milk Symposium** held at the University of Guelph. At this time I urge you to stand with your colleagues, Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound MP Larry Miller and MPP Bill Walker, who toured Glencolton Farms recently and have gained valuable insights into the case for dialogue. You will find a report of their visit, as detailed in the Own Sound Sun Times enclosed with this letter.

Also enclosed with this letter is a package of information which I urge you to read. If, as a result of considering the case for regulation of raw milk, if you see any merit in dialogue rather than confrontation, I would ask you to add your voice to those calling for:

- An immediate withdrawal of the injunctions to close Glencolton Farms
- An exemption, written in to the Milk Act 1990, which allows for cooperative raw milk arrangements
- A meaningful dialogue with Michael Schmidt over the regulation of raw milk production

A breakdown of the most relevant facts regarding modern raw milk production is provided on reverse.

Please know that my vote will be dependent on your willingness to engage in this conversation.

Yours truly,

*Please view the new 14 minute TVO documentary online at:
<http://tvo.org/video/programs/the-agenda-with-steve-paikin/raw-milk/>

*The three original lectures from the Raw Milk Symposium (Jan 2016) can be viewed in three parts:
(Part 1) <http://tiny.cc/ldyday> (Part 2) <http://tiny.cc/qlyday> (Part 3) <http://tiny.cc/inyday>

“We need to look to the government, not the courts, to protect Glencolton Farms.” ~ Lyndon Kirkley

RAW MILK FACTS

- Canada is the only G8 country to still ban raw milk.
- According to Public Health Ontario, 1.85 percent of Ontario’s population drinks raw milk regularly. This approximates to 259,000 people.
- None of these people are sick.
- Since Ontario has only 4,000 dairy farmers, the only people permitted by law to consume raw milk, most of these people are drinking illegally.
- Since Ontario has only 25 known cow-shares, most of these people are also drinking raw milk that is not even informally regulated.
- Since 1938 dairy farmers have learned a lot about refrigeration, hygiene and good practices.
- Cow share schemes do not sell or distribute their milk to anyone who has not made a conscious, personal decision to seek it out.
- Michael Schmidt has never sought to sell or distribute raw milk. Since 1994 he has attempted to work with the authorities to develop regulation of well-run, private cow-share schemes and disseminate knowledge of good practise.
- Michael Schmidt is not anti-pasteurization for mass produced sale and public consumption. He is merely pro the ability of people who wish to visit a farm for fresh food to choose for themselves.
- It would not require a change in the Milk Act to create an exemption for cow-share schemes.
- Canada’s Head of State drinks raw milk!

DECLARATION OF FOOD RIGHTS

--signed by the owners of Glencolton Farms

In a spirit of humility, and with respect for the law of the land, we declare that it is the inherent right of all men and women to grow, and procure wholesome, unadulterated foods for the nourishment of body and soul.

The undersigned respectfully declare that we will peacefully reject unjust laws and regulations that infringe on our basic human right.

We are willing to suffer the consequences rather than comply with laws and regulations that deny people the fundamental freedom to choose and be informed about their own foods.

Together, we pledge to engage in the pursuit of fostering direct relationships between farmers and any individual.

In support of this declaration, we pledge our commitment to protect and secure these rights.