



Friends of Toppenish Creek

March 22, 2021

Yakima Regional Clean Air Agency
186 Iron Horse Court, Suite 101
Yakima, WA. 98901

Dear Director Hurley & YRCAA Board of Directors:

Please consider the concerns listed in Friends of Toppenish Creek's letter dated March 12, 2021 *de novo*. The fact that most of the people who live near Riverview Dairy signed this petition is significant. If the YRCAA staff and board of directors understand the realities of life in Yakima County, you know that these neighbors risked retaliation when they signed.

The signers did not do this lightly. They tried to communicate with the owner and managers of Riverview Dairy before going to authorities. That is what good neighbors do. Unfortunately, the situation is worsening. In that sense, Director Hurley is incorrect when he concludes that, "owners of agricultural activates are usually very responsive to these types of fugitive dust complaints and usually take some actions to address the situation."

The petition asks Yakima County to:

Require the Yakima Regional Clean Air Agency to respond to citizen complaints; to follow their own guidelines for complaint investigation, measure air quality near dairies, and appropriately issue citations.

Kelsey Sanford's investigation of Kenneth Holestine's complaint is an example of an inadequate investigation. We all know that dust and odor wax and wane in every 24-hour period. An assessment 24 hours after the fact is meaningless and an inefficient use of resources.

FOTC suggests that a better evaluation of air emissions from Riverview Dairy would include:

- Provide neighbors with air sensors that measure fine particulate and organize a study in which the neighbors measure fine particulate matter at the same places and times every day. Air quality sensors costing as little as \$100 are now commercially available in a wide variety of designs and with various capabilities. Citizens can learn how to properly use sensors to investigate common air pollutants.
- Record citizen description of air quality problems as part of citizen complaints. This conforms to YRCAA protocols. Believe the people who complain.

- Instruct YRCAA air quality inspectors to tour the LYV during periods of heavy air pollution and assess the air around dairies, such as Riverview. These inspections should be done according to YRCAA protocols.
- Establish air monitors for PM 10, PM 2.5 volatile organic compounds and ammonia in areas that are highly impacted by dairy emissions.

The reason for the Yakima Regional Clean Air Agency's existence is to enforce the Clean Air Act. The YRCAA fails to accomplish this mission as evidenced by the fact that air quality in the Lower Yakima Valley (LYV) is probably the worst in the State of Washington. This occurs in the absence of heavy traffic and occurs in the wintertime when there are no wildfires.

The Right to Farm is not the Right to Pollute:

It is not the role of a clean air agency to shield polluters from the consequences of their actions. Please step back and ask yourselves whether the YRCAA truly implements the Clean Air Act or whether the agency uses its position and power to protect industrial dairies such as Riverview. Chapter 70A.15.4530 RCW is not carte blanche for farmers to drive their neighbors from their homes. Has YRCAA done all that you can to serve both businessmen and the public?

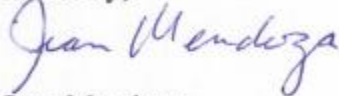
- YRCAA has never secured an expert who can identify agricultural activity consistent with good agricultural practices with respect to dairy management.
 - Beef feedlots in the LYV routinely water pens and corrals to cut down on dust.
 - LYV dairies state that moisture in the pens and corrals increases rates of mastitis and the dairies therefore oppose this practice.
 - FOTC contends that causing dairy cows to walk through, lie down in and live in manure 24 hours a day, in and of itself increases rates of mastitis.
 - Breathing fecal dust is a health risk, not only for people with lung disease but also for otherwise healthy people.
 - YRCAA refusal to require pen watering at dairies is a tacit admission that the agency puts the health of cows ahead of the health of people.
- For years, YRCAA has ignored peer reviewed research that demonstrates the adverse health impacts of dairy emissions on public health. There is a difference between dust from plowing and fecal dust that contains allergens and ammonia.
 - Williams, D'Ann L, Breysse, P. N., McCormack, M. C., Diette, G. B., McKenzie, S., & Geyh, A. S. (2011). Airborne cow allergen, ammonia and particulate matter at homes vary with distance to industrial scale dairy operations: an exposure assessment. *Environmental Health*, 10(1), 1-9. Available at <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1186/1476-069X-10-72>
 - Williams, D'Ann L., McCormack, M. C., Matsui, E. C., Diette, G. B., McKenzie, S. E., Geyh, A. S., & Breysse, P. N. (2016). Cow allergen (Bos d2) and endotoxin concentrations are higher in the settled dust of homes proximate to industrial-scale dairy operations. *Journal of exposure science & environmental*

epidemiology, 26(1), 42-47. Available at
<https://www.nature.com/articles/jes201457>

- Loftus, C., Yost, M., Sampson, P., Arias, G., Torres, E., Vasquez, V. B., ... & Karr, C. (2015). Regional PM_{2.5} and asthma morbidity in an agricultural community: a panel study. *Environmental research*, 136, 505-512. Available at <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4425279/>
- Loftus, C., Yost, M., Sampson, P., Torres, E., Arias, G., Vasquez, V. B., ... & Karr, C. (2015). Ambient ammonia exposures in an agricultural community and pediatric asthma morbidity. *Epidemiology (Cambridge, Mass.)*, 26(6), 794. Available at <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4587379/>
- Loftus, C., Afsharinejad, Z., Sampson, P., Vedal, S., Torres, E., Arias, G., ... & Karr, C. (2020). Estimated time-varying exposures to air emissions from animal feeding operations and childhood asthma. *International journal of hygiene and environmental health*, 223(1), 187-198. Available at <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7020853/>
- The evidence shows that “the odors or fugitive dust have a substantial adverse impact on public health.”
- YRCAA refuses to measure pollutants other than particulate matter even though FOTC has shared our own study that showed high levels of ammonia in the ambient air surrounding dairy operations in the Sunnyside-Grandview area.
- YRCAA does not adequately investigate citizen complaints regarding dairies and fails to follow your own protocols for investigation.

The petition attached to our letter is a request from the citizens of Yakima County for government oversight and regulation of pollution. Good governance demands that the County Commissioners and the YRCAA take this petition seriously and respond with action. Please tell us what actions the YRCAA will take to address air pollution from Riverview Dairy.

Sincerely,



Jean Mendoza

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