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Subject: An open letter to all Regional Councillors, Provincial, and Federal representatives
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From: Renee Delaney <info@smallscalefarms.ca>
Sent: Tuesday, January 2, 2024 5:05:46 PM
To: Renee Delaney <info@smallscalefarms.ca>
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An Open Letter to all Councillors, Provincial and Federal Representatives: A Note On Climate Change

Healthy soil is the base of our entire food system. But more importantly it is the base of our entire earth.

Soil is life.

Whether you're left or right, or anywhere in between, everyone agrees that healthy food comes from healthy soil. So why, if our soil is being destroyed, is no one, including you, doing anything about it?

Niagara is a peninsula, we are practically surrounded by water and our watershed is extensive. The fertilizers we are using on our crops are travelling. We can't even swim in our lakes anymore.

Systemic pesticides are travelling. Gone are the days of contact spraying where the bug would die when it came in contact with the toxin, (and the toxin would fairly quickly dissolve). Now, we are destroying much more than the targeted bug with our genetically modified science.

Chemicals and synthetic fertilizers are used extensively on our soil in Niagara and they have all but destroyed a significant amount of our microbiome - which in fact, keeps our planet healthy. They've affected our food supply and simultaneously they've leached into our water supply. These chemicals are getting into our body's and our babies, so I ask you now, why is nothing being done about this? Why, as the region of Niagara, have we done nothing?

Why have we not even recognized our own farming potential, (shutting down processing plants, little to no marketing campaigns to support local farmers) let alone accept our economic and environmental responsibilities as it relates to our food system?

Especially given the targets and mandates being applied now in regards to climate change.

If Niagara is a corporation then it should be run like one. Businesses and social enterprises constantly leverage their abilities. We have a very particular skill set here in Niagara - all we need now is a government who sees that. I know you see our wine, our weed, and our cash crops, but do you see us small scale farmers?

Clearly, you only need to take one guess as to why we are continuing instead with farming practices that are having such a negative effect on this earth, and it's people:

Profits.

The global pesticide market is Worth 78 billion dollars.

The global soy bean market is 185 billion dollars and is expected to nearly double by 2028.

Corn and corn starch derivatives are at 264 billion and expected to nearly double by 2033.

The global vegetable oil market 258 billion dollars and is expected to increase to 550 billion by 2028.

Obviously there is profit in agriculture. But should we not be looking at more than just financial profit? What about local economic profit or social profit?

And we haven't even started talking about the effect these products have on our health, or on our health care system. **The fact of the matter is** these products and the farming practices utilized to produce them, are literally destroying our ability to take care of ourselves. We are now having to come up with solutions to save us from ourselves?

Why not just fix the problem!

If we ALREADY ARE growing in this manner, on such a large scale, how can farming possibly be ignored when it comes to climate change. We are killing our soil - world wide. So what happens next?

Well. **That's up to you all.** You can either stop participating in this madness and support the growing of a local, sustainable food system, **or** you can suffer the consequences.

There is one thing for sure you can't do though. You can't say that no one told you. Or that you didn't know. Because I can't for the life of me understand how anyone can say they know what climate change is, and yet continue to participate in such a broken system. Or worse. Politicize it.

At the end of the day, it is literally your job to help create policy around protecting our environment, and it is **my job as a farmer** to encourage you to start paying a lot closer attention to our food. And how it's being grown.

Don't just read the stats. Check in on whether or not there's even enough REAL food growing in Niagara to feed ourselves. For example, how can you hear about farmers retiring and not be concerned?

We live in the best place in all of Canada to grow food. And we are in the very best position to show the rest of the country - and world - **how it should be done.**

If of course, we care enough to.

Locally yours,
Renee Delaney



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"Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up."