

## Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)

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**From:** Tamara Jex-Mayrend <tmayrend@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 22, 2014 9:25 AM  
**To:** Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)  
**Subject:** In support of Backyard Chickens in Residential Neighborhoods

Please know that I am in favor of backyard hens in residential neighborhoods. The changes to the law will prevent my family, and others, from having access to a healthier option while preventing my children from an educational opportunity like no other. While my neighborhood currently prohibits backyard hens, many communities throughout the state allow them and my community is going through the steps to allow a few hens.

While I understand that some feel it is unsanitary or that there will be noise and odor issues, most families take exceptionally good care of their animals. In cases where this is not the issue there are usually mandates in the laws put forth in those communities. Please reconsider these changes so that families can have options.

[http://www.mlive.com/news/kalamazoo/index.ssf/2014/01/hold\\_manure\\_pile\\_tweak\\_suggest.html?fb\\_action\\_id\\_s=663920323631451&fb\\_action\\_types=og.likes&fb\\_ref=s%3DshowShareBarUI%3Ap%3Dfacebook-like&fb\\_source=other\\_multiline&action\\_object\\_map=\[243225512520356\]&action\\_type\\_map=\[%22og.likes%22\]&action\\_ref\\_map=\[%22s%3DshowShareBarUI%3Ap%3Dfacebook-like%22](http://www.mlive.com/news/kalamazoo/index.ssf/2014/01/hold_manure_pile_tweak_suggest.html?fb_action_id_s=663920323631451&fb_action_types=og.likes&fb_ref=s%3DshowShareBarUI%3Ap%3Dfacebook-like&fb_source=other_multiline&action_object_map=[243225512520356]&action_type_map=[%22og.likes%22]&action_ref_map=[%22s%3DshowShareBarUI%3Ap%3Dfacebook-like%22)

Tammy Mayrend  
[tmayrend@gmail.com](mailto:tmayrend@gmail.com)

## Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)

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**From:** Ryan Jankoska <ryanjankoska@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 22, 2014 9:17 AM  
**To:** Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)  
**Subject:** Right to farm act

Hello. Please, do not change the right to farm act. We need more small, local people, connecting to the land. It brings us all closer to our land and our food. I currently buy my eggs from my neighbor and like it that way. Let these young unemployed and educated kids make an impact and bring wholesome food to this place. It's good for everyone. Thank you for your dedication to this state.

Thanks,

Ryan jankoska

**Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)**

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**From:** Chris Walker <picantepollo@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 22, 2014 9:16 AM  
**To:** Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)  
**Subject:** Right to Farm Act

To whom it may concern,

As food prices continue to rise it is becoming more and more difficult to feed my family. Every citizen should have the right to grow as much of their own food as possible. please leave the Right to Farm Act alone and continue to allow the people of Michigan to farm their property no matter the location.

Thanks.

Sincerely yours,

Christopher S. Walker

## Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)

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**From:** Lisa Bashert <wombbat@umich.edu>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 22, 2014 9:14 AM  
**To:** Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)  
**Subject:** Changes to the Right to Farm Act

As an urban farmer and beekeeper, I strongly protest the proposed changes to the RTFA. MOST people live in cities. If we are to have the right and freedom to produce our own food, we need to do some of that in cities.

According to the law, changes to the GAAMPs should be based on scientific evidence; no evidence has been provided that supports the current changes to the Site Selection GAAMPs. **Honeybees live in cities -- isn't it better that they live in managed colonies rather than in walls and buildings? Honeybees are deeply under threat in zoned agricultural areas because of the widespread use of neonicotinoid pesticides and other agricultural chemicals. Cities, with their wide diversity of nectar plants (flowers & herbs) are good places for honeybees to prosper.**

According to the law, changes to the GAAMPs should be for purposes of improved public health or the environment; no evidence has been provided that small farms in residentially zoned areas are a threat to public health or the environment. **In fact, small flocks of chickens and 2-3 hives of honeybees do not threaten public health and MANY feel they enhance the environment.**

The proposed changes create language in the GAAMPs that contradicts the language of the law (that is, the GAAMPs require zoning to regulate Livestock Facilities while the Law prohibits zoning from regulating them). While the Agriculture Commission has the authority to change the language of the GAAMPs, they do NOT have the authority to change the meaning of the law, and that is what this change attempts to do.

Please do NOT adopt the proposed changes.

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If you have my email as "wombbat @ mail. umich. edu" delete it! Please use "[wombbat@umich.edu](mailto:wombbat@umich.edu)" or the email below.

Lisa Bashert  
[lisa@ypsifoodcoop.org](mailto:lisa@ypsifoodcoop.org)  
Marketing Coordinator  
Beekeeper, Local Honey Project  
Ypsilanti Food Co-op  
312 North River Street  
Ypsilanti MI 48198

## Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)

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**From:** Levi Meeuwenberg <levi.meeuwenberg@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 22, 2014 9:04 AM  
**To:** Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)  
**Subject:** GAAMPS

Hello,

I understand that some changes are being proposed to the GAAMPS that will bring small residential animal rearers under scrutiny. The way I see it, the freedom to raise our own food; both plants and animals is a basic right that must be protected at all costs. Without this freedom, those without large plots of land are forced into servitude of the landholders because we all need to eat. Plus, food grown in your backyard has less negative impact on the environment because immense fossil fuels aren't needed to transport the food around the globe. This matter strikes at the heart of liberty. Stand for what's right.

Thank you.

Levi Meeuwenberg

## Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)

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**From:** Karol Chopp <karolchopp@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 22, 2014 8:54 AM  
**To:** Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)  
**Subject:** small farm

I just wanted to state that I have been a 4-H leader in vanburen county for 14 years. I am very worried about what the state is thinking of doing.

If the state allows the local governments to rule on whether a person can small farm or hobby farm, that will allow them to make a decision based on the opinions of a 4-5 membership board. I know they are saying that 4-H animals are different but some of these animals are more than just a few months some animals you can show for years!

In Antwerp were I live, they have changed my land 3 times in less than 20 years. I moved to this area so that I had land and could put some animals on it if I wanted too. The animal waste worries and noise issues are silly. If a person doesn't like that kind of sound or smell, why choose to move in an area where you can be subjected to them?

I truly hope that the state will really think long and hard about this issue.

Kids who have animals are hard working and responsible, I have seen it first hand.

## Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)

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**From:** Mandi Corliss <kansas@friendlytech.net>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 22, 2014 8:45 AM  
**To:** Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)  
**Subject:** Small scale farming

Regulations are getting too burdensome. Please stop this encroachment on people's rights. People should be able to have animals, in reason, on their properties, even in residential areas. You should not be able to prevent someone with 4 acres from owning any farm animals. Don't make Michigan somewhere people don't want to live.

Mandi Corliss

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Sent from my Android device with K-9 Mail. Please excuse my brevity.

## Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)

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**From:** Dan & Tanya Procknow <dtprock@centurylink.net>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 22, 2014 8:43 AM  
**To:** Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)  
**Subject:** Proposed changes

Dear commission members,

I am very concerned with some of the proposed GAAMPs changes. I feel they are unfair to small farmers and go beyond establishing safe farming practices. It seems you want to make it so even one animal makes you a "livestock facility" but yet there seems to be no real protection from the Right to Farm act when cases get to court. I am also concerned with the changes in regard to proximity. If you are zoned for agriculture it should not depend on how close residential areas are. We should be encouraging small local farms in our state not making it more difficult for them. I like knowing where and how my food was grown or raised.

Tanya Procknow  
Emmet County

## Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)

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**From:** John DiCello <johnbigbuck@sbcglobal.net>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 22, 2014 8:37 AM  
**To:** Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)  
**Cc:** John DiCello  
**Subject:** Small Farm change proposal

I am opposed to the proposed changes to GAAMPs. Mr. Johnson states "it is our opinion that 4,999 chickens on a 50 x 75 plot is not fair to the neighbors" and he lumps all small farms and hobby farmers into that statement - which is incorrect.

This change will affect many more hobby farmers in rural areas than his narrowly targeted example. This is another example of government overstepping its boundaries, and instead of dealing with a select few, strips the majority of their rights.

Leave small farmers alone.

John DiCello

## Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)

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**From:** James Earley <jimi156@earthlink.net>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 22, 2014 8:39 AM  
**To:** Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)  
**Subject:** R2farm

I believe it is the right of every American to raise food for his or her own consumption. That includes animals. I also believe farm animals should not be raised as pets but only for the purposes of providing food for humans.

Thanks you,

James Earley

## **Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)**

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**From:** Cynthia Cousino <cynthiacousino@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 22, 2014 8:38 AM  
**To:** Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)  
**Subject:** Changes to Right to Farm law

Everyone should have the right to produce their own food. Leave the Right to Farm Act alone! The proposed changes create language in the GAAMPs that contradicts the language of the law (that is, the GAAMPs require zoning to regulate Livestock Facilities while the Law prohibits zoning from regulating them). While the Agriculture Commission has the authority to change the language of the GAAMPs, they do NOT have the authority to change the meaning of the law, and that is what this change attempts to do.

According to the law, changes to the GAAMPs should be for purposes of improved public health or the environment; no evidence has been provided that small farms in residentially zoned areas are a threat to public health or the environment.

Cynthia Cousino  
15555 Pine St  
Monroe, MI 48161

## Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)

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**From:** tromsrabbit@gmail.com  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 21, 2014 5:00 PM  
**To:** Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)  
**Subject:** Small farmer

Leave this alone

Sent from my Verizon Wireless 4G LTE Smartphone

## Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)

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**From:** Dale Bell <gladasdoubleo@aol.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 21, 2014 5:06 PM  
**To:** Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)  
**Subject:** Chickens in my coop

To whom it may concern,

I just want you to know that I love eating fresh eggs out of my own yard.  
Having chickens is a true blessing. Thank You for your time,

Dale M Bell  
Birch Run, Mi. 48415

## Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)

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**From:** John <jdluton@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 21, 2014 5:44 PM  
**To:** Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)  
**Subject:** Proposed changes to GAAMPs

I am writing to express my opposition to the proposed changes to Michigan's GAAMPs. It appears that these changes would (by redefining what constitutes a "livestock production facility") essentially make it illegal for anyone in any exclusively residential neighborhood to own even a single chicken or goat. This is a MASSIVE overreach by the State of Michigan on our right to pursue our own happiness (and grown/breed our own food). I do not own any animals but definitely support my right to have a couple chickens without Lansing defining my yard as a "livestock production facility". Please send these proposed changes to the shredder...

John Luton  
Ypsilanti.

## Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)

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**From:** scrawnybrowny@aol.com  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 21, 2014 6:09 PM  
**To:** Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)  
**Subject:** Rtf

Good evening,

I am writing you to let you know just how important my daughter's horses are to them and the right to farm act. They have grown so far in the self esteem area and have had a better focus on where their life is going. Meaning having the horses here, at our own home, has helped build responsibility and helped keep my girls from being bored and getting into "trouble". If the RTF act is removed I would love for you to come tell my girls to their face they can not have their horses any more. See the hurt in their eyes! Please do not remove this act. . It is so important to the youth. Especially in this time when the social Media is so prevalent and is causing so many problems with youth. Having animals at our home has been a great asset to my girls lives. Don't take this away from these kids!

Sent from my Verizon Wireless 4G LTE smartphone

## Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)

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**From:** kimberly lemaster <sunslastorbit@outlook.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 21, 2014 6:04 PM  
**To:** Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)

Please listen to the people that put you in office , we have the right to have animals on our property, if you bill passes it will end our farm which we have had for 23 yrs a place our horses and foals our raised. we bought our property it was zoned ad and our township has changed it to rural, we have the township call us constant on when we bought our property, we tell them 23 years ago. they hang up. if you bill passes I will make sure every person I know will never vote for you again. We are the people and it seems we have no rights due to the governments poor laws. please open your eyes, give us people you don't care about a chance we were here along time before you were ever in office!

Sent from Windows Mail

## Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)

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**From:** pniece@chartermi.net  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 21, 2014 6:26 PM  
**To:** Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)  
**Subject:** No farm animals-too many chemicals in farming

Dear Sir,

Many communities have already addressed this and let the rest of the communities decide for themselves what is best for theirs!

My community of Comstock is addressing this issue at present!

You and the State bureaucrats have no business meddling in local community affairs. You are trampling on community rights. My right as a property owner to work with my community on this issue. Because of the chemicals and food and meat from other countries which don't have the same safeguards make it necessary to raise our own poultry, rabbits, goats and the like for safe food for our families. Even farmers in this country use a lot of chemicals on their land to create bigger yields.

A Comstock, Michigan resident, 49048  
Phil Niece

## Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)

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**From:** Kathy Cassady <katmoose45@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 21, 2014 6:47 PM  
**To:** Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)  
**Subject:** Right to farm

Dear Mr. Wilcox,

I believe folks should have the right to have small farms on their property.

I think trying to be self sufficient in these days of all the junk that is being fed to us is the only way to be sure what you are eating.

I am totally against any GAAMPs trying to tell folks that they aren't allowed to have animals on their property.

Thank you for your time.

Take care & God Bless. Kath

## Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)

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**From:** Noah Borders <noahborders@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 21, 2014 9:14 PM  
**To:** Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)  
**Subject:** Right to Farm Act

It has come to my attention that there is an upcoming vote that could effect my right to own chickens as a michigan resident. I live in an urban area and it is extremely important to me and everyone living in my town that we have the right to grow our own food, and backyard agricultural animals are a vital part of that process. I deeply urge you to do everything you can to protect and/or expand our rights in this area. It is already difficult to get anyone to let you grow your own food. Please don't let it get harder!

Thank you

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-Noah Borders

Call / Text : 248-821-9188

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## Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)

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**From:** Goose Elliott <representativegoose@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, January 17, 2014 6:43 PM  
**To:** Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)  
**Subject:** Please make no changes that hinder the Right To Farm Act

The main concern comes with the proposed changes made to the "Site Selection and Odor Control for Livestock Production Facilities." Please rethink creating the new designation "Livestock Facility." This designation means a family with two roosters on an acre of land would be considered a Livestock Facility and undergo regulation. This is a new limitation against small farms. In a time in this state where the rights of the small farm should be increased, the members of the board are gathering to limit and regulate them even more. I volunteer on two farms within two counties of Michigan. I am well aware that this state is losing its small family owned farms to large corporate farms, housing developments, and/or houses that sit on 10 to 20 acres. Less than 2 percent of our country engages in farming. The new changes are to benefit only those in housing developments and other "residential areas" that do not want to witness a small farm next to them. These proposals turn a blind eye to the people who should be protected. Establishing Category 4 sites, where no agricultural practices can take place, only hurts the farmer. The members of the board who approve such proposals will directly harm the existence of the small family owned farm. If this keeps up pretty soon there will be no such thing as a right to farm. (I hope that is not what this council is trying to do!) Thank you so much for your time. I do appreciate it.

Goose Elliott  
Ionia County, Mi.

## Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)

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**From:** PamelaSmyth@ferris.edu  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 21, 2014 9:02 AM  
**To:** Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)  
**Subject:** right to farm

I would like to let you know how important the right to farm protection is for small farmers, in times like these where food is very expensive and many people have allergies to processed foods it is vital that we be able to grow and raise our own food. I suffered from multiple illness's before I found that I needed to drink goat milk instead of cow, and that I cannot tolerate processed food. As a nurse I barely make enough money to pay my bills, so getting a milk goat and a couple of chickens, and having my own garden enabled me to be healthy and to raised my kids healthy. The right to farm act saved me from the harrassment of a neighbor, and enabled me to continue until I could afford to buy a little farm out in the country. It should be the right of every American to raise their own food, and the right to farm act should continue to protect small farmers.

Pam S. Smyth  
Lab Coordinator  
Ferris State University  
VFS 426  
200 Ferris Dr.  
Big Rapids MI, 49307  
[smythp@ferris.edu](mailto:smythp@ferris.edu)

## Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)

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**From:** Julianna Sauber <julesoriginals@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 21, 2014 9:09 AM  
**To:** Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)  
**Subject:** Regarding proposed change to definition of farm

I am concerned about the proposed changes to Michigan's GAAMP practices regarding small farms. We have only a few chickens and a couple of turkeys in a small rural town, and our ability to have chickens from our own eggs, nourishing to our health and our wellbeing. The ability to have these chickens does many important things, please let me outline why I believe it's important to people to keep these animals.

1. It's important that we retain the knowledge of farming
2. As food costs continue to go up, and concerns about what animals are being fed and food safety with large farming operations, its much more cost effective for us to raise our own chickens and have our own eggs.
3. It's important that our kids learn the basics of farming so they may have the ability to decide what their future life will be by being exposed to many different opportunities.
4. As the government continues to provide food to a growing number of people starving - small farms can be an avenue to teach individual responsibility and sustainability. That sustainability could teach them independence from the need for government intervention and allow you to divert funds to programs which serve people in other ways.
5. Our health is improved by clean healthy food, and that improvement of health takes the burden of healthcare off the government and hospitals.

Our small number of chickens are actually a lot of fun for our neighbors, and they are happy to have them there. Please help maintain the independence and sustainability of small farms which provide a valuable service to local people and communities.

Sincerely  
Julianna

## **Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)**

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**From:** Jessica Shier <jlshier23@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 21, 2014 9:14 AM  
**To:** Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)  
**Subject:** Proposed Changs to GAAMPs Site Selection for Livestock Production Facilities

I recently became aware of some proposed changes to the GAAMPs for Site Selection and Odor Control for Livestock Production Facilities. I took the time to read up on what GAAMPs was and then read the current Site Selection and Odor Control section of these guidelines to get a good understanding of the current guidelines and what these changes might mean. After my review I am very concerned about the proposed changes. I live in an area that was once all farms but has slowly over the past 20 years seen lot sizes shrink and residential density increase. Currently I raise a group of poultry in accordance with my local ordinances to provide food for my family, in addition I purchase the majority of my meat supply from small farmers in my local area, including beef, chicken, and pork.

The Right to Farm Act was originally implemented to protect farmers from litigation brought on by people moving into rural areas and I feel that the protections of this law is needed more today as land is still being divided and people are still moving into these areas. The current GAAMPs regulations seem very reasonable to me in protecting both residential areas and farmers who produce at a large scale. I have concerns about expanding GAAMPs to include smaller producers as well as small urban and suburban farms. There is a strong movement in this country for consumers to want products from smaller scale operations meaning these small farms are more important than ever. I am concerned about a loss of these farms and a loss of choice for the local product I wish to purchase by expanding this section of the law to include these small and smaller scale producers. I do not see any benefit to these changes for the local food movement or the small time farmers. I see this as a way to give more teeth to those who move into rural subdivisions without an appreciation for a neighbor farmers cattle, horses, hogs, or whatever. Small scale animal production is not a high dollar industry adding regulations to prevent them from expanding or locating in areas on lot sizes adequate to support their production makes no sense to me and I cannot support it. Adding more red tape and regulation for farmers that simply want to do what they love without the fear of litigation is too much regulation.

Please do not over regulate small scale livestock producers. Please protect my right to make the choices I want for the food I purchase, and please say no to unnecessary red tape that does not help farmers. Leave GAAMPs for Site Selection and Odor Control for Livestock Production Facilities as it is!

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**Jessica L. Shier**

Cell: 248.534.8724

## Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)

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**From:** Jami Blaauw-Hara <jhara@ncmich.edu>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 21, 2014 9:10 AM  
**To:** Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)  
**Subject:** GAAMPS

I am a backyard farmer, with a small flock of chickens within our city's codes and an angora rabbit. I urge you to exempt Category 4 sites from GAAMPS oversight. We use all of the eggs and wool we produce, and it's a source of joy and hard work for our family. We love our animals and feel strongly about safety. Please let backyard farmers work within our city codes. Leave the control in local hands.

Thank you for your time,

Jami Blaauw-Hara  
Boyne City, MI  
231-330-9723  
[jblaauwhara@gmail.com](mailto:jblaauwhara@gmail.com)

## Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)

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**From:** David Zeemering <dzeemering@signatureassociates.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 21, 2014 9:00 AM  
**To:** Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)  
**Subject:** GAAMP / Right to Farm

To whom it may concern:

Upon recently learning about the proposed changes to the State of Michigan's Generally Acceptable Agricultural Practices and the creation of the so – called "Category 4" site classification, I was compelled to let my feelings on this subject be heard and added to the discourse and debate on the issue.

Like many in our fair State, I grew up in a suburban setting which included homes in near proximity to each other, and also had rabbits, dogs, etc. as family pets. This added to the quality of our lives and also to the education and the teaching of myself and my siblings to not only care for these animals, but also to respect ones neighbors by keeping the animals on our property under control and cared for daily. We had neighbors down the street that had horses, chickens, and even a donkey, and while you could occasionally hear these animals, most neighbors liked the fact that they were in close proximity and added a little country charm to the neighborhood.

If we allow our State Government – one "By The People and For the People" to constant expand its reach - as it will under these proposed changes - until it directly affects our quality of life it will be an affront to its citizens and their constitutional rights to "Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness".

Please do not allow for these changes to be enacted as proposed in such a sweeping, radical fashion. Please work closely with the Michigan Farm Bureau, the Michigan Small Farm Council, and concerned citizens to bring about fair and equitable changes to the GAAMPs and to carefully define any new site categories, i.e. the proposed "Category 4" site definitions, without using gross generalizations such as applying this classification to all residentially- zoned areas. If that were the case when and where I grew up, my childhood would have been less full by such measures.

Respectfully,

David Zeemering,  
-Grand Rapids, MI

## Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)

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**From:** mindy holohan <mgholohan@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 21, 2014 9:22 AM  
**To:** Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)  
**Subject:** public comment

CAFOs and flocks of backyard chickens are not the same so should not be treated the same by the Michigan Department of Agriculture. "One size fits all" agricultural regulation is a bad fit for local food production in Michigan. We strongly encourage our Agriculture Commission representatives to use common sense when considering changes to the GAAMPS for Site Selection and Odor Control for Livestock Production Facilities. Changing the number of animal units that create a Livestock Facility from 50 animal units and higher to any number of animal units (including 1!) is a drastic and shortsighted change that violates the agricultural rights of small farmers and hobby farms. Additionally, the exclusion of a new category of sites proposed by MDARD as Category 4 Residential from Right to Farm protections is a sweeping change that will disrupt the common sense agricultural rights of many. We urge the Agriculture Commission to revisit these proposed changes and to ensure that small farms and environmentally essential small scale food production is protected in the State of Michigan.

Mindy Holohan & Kevin Holohan  
Grand Rapids, MI

## **Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)**

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**From:** Stephanie London <mamalondon0611@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 21, 2014 9:27 AM  
**To:** Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)  
**Subject:** Freedom to Farm Act

Leave the act alone. How dare you try to take away our right to have farm animals in residential areas. As long as there is enough room for the animals, let them stay!!!! America, land of the free.....wait, what?!

Stephanie London

## Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)

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**From:** bryanheany37@gmail.com on behalf of Bryan Heany <admin@37ent.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 21, 2014 10:17 AM  
**To:** Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)  
**Subject:** GAAMPS

Hello - I am writing to express my disagreement with the proposed changes to Michigan GAAMPS which would categorize any farm animals as a livestock operation. Perhaps I have misused the terms, but I mean to express that people should be able to keep, for example, a few chickens or a goat for their own food safety and security, without being classified as anything larger. I understand that the GAAMPS include guidelines and restrictions for certain areas and such, so there is no need to classify a single farm animal as a livestock operation. That is simply inaccurate. If you are trying to keep farms from popping up in people's yards, perhaps you should exert your efforts in keeping factory foods safe, instead of making it illegal for people to grow their own food and keep a few chickens for eggs, for example.

I'm sorry that my comment is not more informed. I hope the idea here is clear enough for you. Please do not change the GAAMPS to keep people from having some kind of food security. There are other ways to curb misuse and poor applications of the guidelines, and these should be community-based, not state-led.

Thank you  
Bryan Heany  
Kalamazoo, MI

## Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)

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**From:** Grace Yoder <graciyoder@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 21, 2014 10:15 AM  
**To:** Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)  
**Subject:** Right to keep animals in residential areas

My name is Grace Yoder and I am an urban farmer in Ypsilanti city. I am also in the process of buying 6 acres just outside of the city in Superior Twp. I currently keep chickens on our city lot, and they pose no nuisance to my neighbors. They also provide us with eggs for most of the year, and help me to clean up and fertilize my vegetable garden in the winter. When I move to the 6 wooded acres in the township, I plan to get more animals in accordance with the current laws, however we will still technically be in a residential area.

I got word that there are some who are proposing changes to the law that would further prohibit small farms and individuals from keeping animals in residential areas, and I want to voice my opposition to such changes. Times are changing and self-sufficiency and a resilient local food system are increasingly more important in our community. We have a need for a more mixed use zoning that accommodates for the communities' diverse needs- including the need to farm/produce food in a wide variety of settings. Please don't further inhibit individuals' rights to provide for themselves and their communities by limiting the ability to farm in safe, ethical, clean ways. There are other ways to ensure that good standards are upheld and that farming practices don't become a nuisance to neighbors.

Thank you for your time.

Grace Yoder  
734.787.4777  
Ypsilanti MI 48198

## Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)

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**From:** shanna potter <shannaepotter@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 21, 2014 9:45 AM  
**To:** Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)  
**Subject:** In reference GAAMP Site Selection and Odor Control for New and Expanding Livestock Facilities

To whom this may concern,  
My comment is in reference to GAAMP Site Selection and Odor Control for New and Expanding Livestock Facilities, and I oppose the inclusion of Category 4 sites because these localized regulations should be left to city zoning ordinances and not state governance.

In addition, over the past few years my husband and I have taken passion with urban farming in our standard lot in Ferndale, MI. It gives us great pride and purpose to be able to grow our own food whether it be the vegetables in our garden, the eggs from our three chickens (who have just become of age to lay), or the honey from our bees. Please, PLEASE do not take this right away from us. This would turn my and my husband's, and many of our friends and members of our families', entire world upside down.

Sincerely,  
Shanna Potter

## Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)

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**From:** Tabatha Sieracki <tabbyday@wowway.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 21, 2014 10:44 AM  
**To:** Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)  
**Subject:** Please Preserve Michigan's Right to Farm Act

To Whom It May Concern;

Please Preserve Michigan's Right to Farm Act, all citizens in Michigan have a right to participate in the production of their own food, wherever they live.

According to the law, changes to the GAAMPs should be based on scientific evidence; no evidence has been provided that supports the current changes to the Site Selection GAAMPs. Also according to the law, changes to the GAAMPs should be for purposes of improved public health or the environment; no evidence has been provided that small farms in residentially zoned areas are a threat to public health or the environment. The proposed changes create language in the GAAMPs that contradicts the language of the law (that is, the GAAMPs require zoning to regulate Livestock Facilities while the Law prohibits zoning from regulating them). While the Agriculture Commission has the authority to change the language of the GAAMPs, they do NOT have the authority to change the meaning of the law, and that is what this change attempts to do.

Sincerely,

Tabatha Sieracki  
Warren, MI

## **Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)**

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**From:** Beth Acker <ackerind@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 21, 2014 10:46 AM  
**To:** Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)  
**Subject:** MI Right to Farm Act

We are VERY opposed to the proposed changes.

1. According to the law, changes to the GAAMPs should be based on scientific evidence; no evidence has been provided that supports the current changes to the Site Selection GAAMPs.
2. According to the law, changes to the GAAMPs should be for purposes of improved public health or the environment; no evidence has been provided that small farms in residentially zoned areas are a threat to public health or the environment.
3. The proposed changes create language in the GAAMPs that contradicts the language of the law (that is, the GAAMPs require zoning to regulate Livestock Facilities while the Law prohibits zoning from regulating them). While the Agriculture Commission has the authority to change the language of the GAAMPs, they do NOT have the authority to change the meaning of the law, and that is what this change attempts to do.

PLEASE do not allow the proposed changes.

Beth & John Acker  
7550 Allen Rd  
Clarkston, MI

## Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)

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**From:** julian lauzzana <jlauzzana@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 21, 2014 12:08 PM  
**To:** Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)  
**Subject:** GAAMPs and Small Farms

To Whom it May Concern:

Although I personally live in a rural area, I am concerned about the possibility of increased restrictions in urban and suburban areas related to livestock and gardening. Urban agriculture is beneficial to the people and to the environment. Perhaps more importantly, America is the Land of the Free. Decentralizing income generated from agriculture is part of the formula for building a healthy democratic society, especially one that is economically based in capitalism. Furthermore, we should have the right to know from where our food comes. So much of the large scale agricultural practices are coming into question. Confined Animal Factory Operations, large scale batch processing plants, contaminated foods, unsafe pesticides, food additives that lead to childhood obesity, etc. Until the playing field is leveled, and subsidies/incentives for large scale industrial agriculture are removed, it is simply not possible to acquire very much safe, wholesome, local food in our stores. The only solution, for growing numbers of us, is to raise animals and vegetables and work within our communities, schools and churches to get a handle on our regional food systems. The safety and nuisance factor of large scale industrial factory farming is not being questioned, so why are small farms across this great land being called a nuisance? That is simply unjust and unwise. Please hear my voice as one of many. Thanks for reading.

Julian Lauzzana

Father, farmer, media producer, educator, live events coordinator, sound engineer, community homesteader.

[www.earthenheart.com](http://www.earthenheart.com)

## **Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)**

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**From:** Suze Harrison <suzeharrison150@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 21, 2014 12:49 PM  
**To:** Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)  
**Subject:** Farm Animals in Residential Neighborhoods

Greetings,

I am in disagreement with the proposed limitation on farm animals in residential areas. Having rabbits and chickens has been an important part of our family in recent years. I do not want this opportunity to be limited. I am concerned that we are making self-sustainability less attainable. We need our citizens to be MORE self-sustaining, not less in these changing and challenging times.

Thank you for your attention,  
Susan Harrison  
(734)945-8542

## Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)

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**From:** Chris Duke <chrisduke@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 21, 2014 12:44 PM  
**To:** Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)  
**Subject:** Oppose limitations to small-scale backyard farming

To the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development's Environmental Stewardship Division,

I am writing to oppose the proposed changes to GAAMPs that would limit small-scale backyard farming, such as backyard chickens and small numbers of livestock. I firmly believe that growing one's own food is an essential personal freedom that should not be obstructed -- Michigan currently appropriately enshrines this in the Right to Farm Act. Don't take away the rights of small-scale farmers -- small, sustainable agriculture will only become more and more important to our future.

Thank you,

Christopher Duke, PhD

180 Lake Village Dr  
Ann Arbor, MI 48103

## Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)

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**From:** Michelle Brejnak <michellebrejnak@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 21, 2014 12:44 PM  
**To:** Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)  
**Subject:** 2014 Proposed GAMMPS site selection changes

To The Agriculture Commission for the State of Michigan

My name is Michelle Brejnak and I currently reside in New Baltimore Michigan located in Macomb County. I sit on the Executive Board for the Michigan Small Farm Council as the Secretary. I am very concerned with the 2014 proposed GAAMPS changes with respect to Site Selection. If I am reading these proposed changes correctly, and if passed, then many current small scale farms will be in jeopardy of nuisance law suits and any future small scale farms will not be able to become established. The changes will exclude so many Michiganders from farming. Moreover, these changes do not seem to be based on any scientific evidence that addresses the fundamentals of good farming practices. Let it be noted that I oppose the proposed 2014 GAMMPS site selection changes that essentially takes away nuisance protection for small scale farmers under the Michigan Right to Farm Act.

This is especially distressing to me personally because I strive to find local food sources from ethically responsible farmers. I believe that small scale farming should be allowed to flourish in Michigan as a more sustainable option to provide food for our families. If the proposed GAAMPS changes in site selection are passed, only large-scale farms where questionable farming practices occur in the areas of animal treatment and soil conservation will be favored and the only option for food sources here in Michigan.

When I spoke at the Ag-commission meeting that was held in Detroit this past year, I addressed the commissioners during the public comment time asking them to consider allowing for specific set a GAMMPS that would allow for State wide small scale farming in urban areas. We all agreed that the current food system will not continue to support our growing population. I certainly felt listened to and respected during that meeting. I was encouraged that the Ag-Commission would bring forth ideas that address the current problems in farming while thinking ahead of the future problems that are certain with regards to farming practices and food sovereignty.

In conclusion, I ask the Ag-commission to consider scientific facts when making these decisions about farming practices in Michigan. I strongly believe that small scale farming can thrive in Michigan as a viable answer to the need for quality food and good farming practices to keep our land safe for the future. Many communities are fostering new farming practices with wonderful results. The Ag-commission must realize their important role to allow for farming in the future.

Respectfully,

Michelle R. Brejnak

## **Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)**

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**From:** Lindsay Balash <lizzyboo82@aol.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 21, 2014 12:23 PM  
**To:** Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)  
**Subject:** Residential farming concern

To whom it's concerned,  
Dear Ma'am or Sir,

I am writing to ask you to oppose changes to residential farming laws and allowances. As long as animals are being properly cared for there should be no reason to change these laws. Michigan's Right to Farm laws need to remain as they are.

Thank you for your consideration,  
Lindsay Balash

## Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)

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**From:** j35886m@comcast.net  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 21, 2014 12:37 PM  
**To:** Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)  
**Subject:** Changes to Michigan GAAMP

I am writing to express my disappointment in the proposed changes to Michigan's GAAMP and the Right to Farm. We live in Van Buren County in a residential neighborhood. We raise poultry for eggs and meat and rabbits for meat. We are a 4-H family and if the proposed changes are made it would cut into our ability to participate. I would propose that my neighbors do not even know we have poultry or rabbits as we responsibly monitor the smell and waste. In return our poultry assist with pest control. I just think there are so many other things that should be a bigger concern then back yard flocks and 4-H projects. Having these animals have taught my children responsibility, marketing, sportsmanship, herdsmanship, sustainability, cooking skills, self reliance and self promotion. Please do not support the proposed changes.

Regards,

Jennifer Miller.

## **Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)**

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**From:** Charlie Williams <spintousa@netscape.net>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 21, 2014 12:35 PM  
**To:** Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)  
**Subject:** Michigan RTFA

MDARD is overstepping its authority regarding the "site selection" GAAMP. One of the most important organizational principles of our republican government is the separation of powers. Only the legislature has the power to change the law; police, judges and bureaucrats simply obey.

MDARD should not attempt to interpret the Michigan RTFA. If MDARD feels that the law as passed by the legislature is inadequate, it should submit a request to the legislature to modify the law. Otherwise, the Department should simply administer the law as written.

Thank you.

Charlie Williams  
1178 Birdie Ln  
Holland MI 49423

## Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)

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**From:** Tr3man <tr3man@aol.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 21, 2014 12:33 PM  
**To:** Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)  
**Subject:** Proposed changes to GAAMPs

My wife and I have just retired and for the last five years, before retirement, have been working to establish a small plot for gardening and a house for 15 chickens and a chicken run. If we run into a situation where we should have to give up our ability to supplement our food bill with our hard work and money spent over the years for construction and hours of learning, it would be a devastating loss. I just don't know what we would do.

We disagree with any changes to the GAAMPs that would harm an individual or family in the pursuit of their dream of self sufficiency. We believe that small farmers should be protected by the law and not persecuted by the law. The State should not be adopting changes to the rules that require that more taxpayer money be spent on enforcing regulations on a poor minority. To adopt rules that stifle an individual's or family's ability to survive is diametrically opposed to the American way of life.

Cordially,

Tom & Ann Carpenter

Alto Michigan

## Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)

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**From:** Jeremy Marr <jmarr@greenelabs.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 21, 2014 12:17 PM  
**To:** Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)  
**Subject:** right to farm

Please don't take away my ability to produce my own food. Factory farms are not the way to go.

Jeremy Marr

## Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)

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**From:** Michelle Moore <mmoore@glec.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 21, 2014 12:15 PM  
**To:** Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)  
**Subject:** Right to Farm

Don't take Right to Farm protection away from small farmers. The capacity to be self-sufficient should be available to *everyone*. Please do not change the definition of Livestock Facility to include *any* number of animals and do not add a category that will make it impossible for those in residentially zoned areas to raise fowl.

Thank you,  
Michelle A. Moore  
Research Scientist  
Great Lakes Environmental Center  
739 Hastings St.  
Traverse City, MI 49686  
231-941-2230  
[mmoore@glec.com](mailto:mmoore@glec.com)

## **Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)**

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**From:** Throne, Heather (MDA)  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 21, 2014 12:15 PM  
**To:** Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)  
**Cc:** Holton, Jennifer (MDA); Johnson, James (MDA); Whitman, Wayne (MDA)  
**Subject:** FW: MDARS and new GAAMPs

Rhonda – Forwarding on this public comment for the GAAMPs.

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**From:** Steve Petrovich [<mailto:petro@shooterz.biz>]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 21, 2014 12:04 PM  
**To:** Throne, Heather (MDA)  
**Subject:** MDARS and new GAAMPs

Dear Ms Throne,

I am completely against this excessive governing proposal of regulation of farm animals. This is a slippery slope for freedom and individual rights. Whats next, overregulation of horses, dogs, cats, gardens, etc?

I would favor livestock limits in Non-Ag areas, but to completely over-regulate and deny someone wanting a few chickens is Un-American.

Please consider my comments for this upcoming regulatory change.

Sincerely,

Steve Petrovich  
32880 Raphael Rd  
Farmington Hills, Mi 48336.

P.S.  
I Also own property in Hadley, MI which I plan to retire at and want to have a small self sustainable farm.

## Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)

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**From:** Samantha Bellairs <sammyboo12@bellairsfiberfarm.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 21, 2014 11:57 AM  
**To:** Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)  
**Subject:** small animals in residential areas

if small animals were not permitted in residential area's not only would my sisters fiber buisness would be affected but my whole life would be changed in the worst way possible. i live in a small town and my chickens and rabbits are not just some hobby, no they are not even just my pets, they are my friends, when you get down to sit with an animal and just talk to them, you would be amazed at what you learn. you can almost hear them talk back to you, if they were gone... part of my life would go with them. it wouldn't be removing farm animals from a residential area, it would be removing so much more than that, so i ask you to think what are you really trying to do? take animals from residetial areas? but what is the consequece? people like me who's animals are part of their lives? i can't imagin my life without my pets, without my pet rabbits and chickens.

-samantha bellairs

## Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)

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**From:** Melissa Grant <melgrant1@live.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 21, 2014 11:55 AM  
**To:** Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)  
**Subject:** GAMMP Changes

To whom it may concern,

I am currently a resident of Waterford Twp, MI. My goal in the next few months is to purchase a house in an area where I may keep a small flock of chickens, maybe 4-5, and a couple of turkeys with the intent of being more self sufficient and also to teach my children about raising livestock for food. In reading your proposed changes to the Right to Farm Act and the possible inability to keep even a single chicken in a residential area, I am extremely concerned about my rights as a citizen and a human being. Right now America is being forced to purchase food from a grocery store that has chemicals to combat other chemicals put into our meats, pumped up chickens grown in horrendous conditions and we are forced to live by the prices and standards put out by the grocery stores. In doing so, we are also forced to maintain a household in which both parents are forced to work full time just to survive the bills, taxes and food cost. I want to break this cycle so I may be able to raise my children more by myself and less in daycare, and one way of doing this is to raise my own food. As far as neighborhood that has less than 1/3 acre plots, I can see having a livestock restriction. In Highland you have to have 1/2 acre in order to keep animals below 75 pounds, and I think Highland has the right idea, and that is where we are looking to live. If you pass this law/modifications, then I will not be able to even move anywhere that would allow me to raise my own livestock. My neighbors have annoying stinky dogs, but why cant I have chickens, at least they have a purpose, keeping down the bugs and feeding my family.

Enacting changes and laws such as this only contributes to society's dependence on the government and people's businesses and does not allow us to be more responsible for our own food. I urge you to reconsider allowing people to keep their backyard chickens for their own uses and allow us our Godgiven right to raise our own food.

Melissa Grant

## Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)

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**From:** AMSparr@aol.com  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 21, 2014 11:47 AM  
**To:** Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)  
**Cc:** senator@stabenow.senate.gov; senator\_levin@levin.senate.gov  
**Subject:** GAAMP

To whomever it may concern:

It appears to me that once again, people are trying to over-regulate. Why are we putting more rules into effect? Because people from the city are moving out to more rural land and don't want to hear roosters crow or smell cows? I'm sorry, these are the animals that feed us, feed them. If they don't like it, then go back to the city. Even in the city, animals are the least of the problems as in chickens. Children that are running the streets make more noise than chickens. Looks like we need to regulate parents and children too, are you going to enforce that as well?

I live in a rural community, all of my neighbors have chickens. I have chickens. We care about what we eat, have gardens, can our food, hunt for our food. We don't want GMO tainted crap. The only people in this area without chickens, have 5 dogs that do more damage and make more noise, including 1 being a vicious dog that has bitten, than my chickens have ever done. We don't sell our eggs or pork, this isn't a business entity. I am in the business of just feeding my family. My husband is ill and has been directed by his physicians to stay away from processed foods. The eggs in the store are processed! We make our breakfasts, lunches, and dinners from scratch to the best that we can.

I suggest that you stop what you are doing, stop over-regulating things, and get yourself some chickens. If you don't want any, that is fine as it is your RIGHT, but why are you trying to take away my RIGHT to farm on my property? You don't pay my taxes. I do. It was legal when I moved here to have chickens, pigs, goats, etc, but now you want to take away my right to do so? Are you going to pay for me to move to an area that I can do this? I think that is what you should do, pay for me to move then.

I can't make it to your big meeting, but if you have any questions, please feel free to call me. My home number is 810-793-1152. I would love to have a chat with you about this.

Best regards,  
Angela Sparr

## **Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)**

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**From:** Sheri Bellairs <dutch505@bellairsfiberfarm.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 21, 2014 11:42 AM  
**To:** Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)  
**Subject:** Right to Farm Bill

I am writing to encourage you and others to turn down the new legislation that will change the right to farm bill. It is extremely important to me and thousands of families that do youth programs like 4H and FFA.

Children and Youth ages 5-19 are enabled and encouraged to learn life skills through their animal projects. They may be raising poultry or rabbits or other small animals in residential areas. Some kids then develop entrepreneurial skills and sell products from their animal projects.

For those of us that live in residential zoned areas we would no longer have the right to keep our much loved animals. We keep our animals and areas clean and our neighbors enjoy seeing them. We also provide eggs for our neighbors from our poultry. The rabbits provide fertilizer for a freinds garden. America is all about neighbors helping each other and 4H and animals have been a big help in teaching my children this concept.

The animals have also been a major part of my kids lives since joining 4H 9 years ago. They have learned responsibility both financial and personal; as well as entrepreneurship. My daughters operate a small business using the wool grown from their rabbits.

Please do not let them change this bill. Protect our family heritage and protect great youth programs.

Sheri Bellairs  
Bellairs Fiber Farm  
Munith MI 49259

## Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)

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**From:** bbos@netpenny.net  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 21, 2014 11:41 AM  
**To:** Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)  
**Subject:** GAAMPS

I am against the new rule of backyard farming. Were will the next generation of farmers come from? We have to spike the childrens interest at an early age and what better way of doing it the allowing a few animals in their back yards. That may than get them involved in 4H.

With the average age of the Michigan farmer being in the high fiftys, some one will have to replace us if the State is going to continue to be a large part of Michigans GDP. Agriculture is always in the top 3 industries in the State. We all know what happen when the Auto industry declined. Please do not let this happen to Agriculture.

Bill Bos Jr  
MSU 1974 Horticulture  
Bos Centennial Farm  
[www.bosgreenhouse.com](http://www.bosgreenhouse.com)

## Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)

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**From:** Betty Jo Nash <bnash\_reg5ffa@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 21, 2014 11:28 AM  
**To:** Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)  
**Subject:** Right to Farm Act Public Comment

I recently received information about a proposed change to the Michigan Right to Farm Act that will affect urban and suburban agriculturalists, with a public comment period slated for this week. I support the development of a new Generally Accepted Agriculture Management Practice (GAAMP) specifically outlining the protections of urban and suburban agriculturalists. The current GAAMPs were not written or intended for use to support agricultural practices in a residential setting. Use of current GAAMPs in this setting opens the risks of the law being questioned in court, and if determined unsatisfactory could lead to subsequent erosion of the legitimacy of the law in the setting for which it was originally intended--rural farms. I do believe that urban and suburban agriculture is an important pursuit that has the opportunity to educate consumers and add to the improvement of nutrition for local growers and buyers. With the average person being 3-5 generations removed from the production of food, the practice of urban agriculture is providing an important link. To support the continuation of urban and suburban agriculture it makes the most sense to develop a GAAMP that will meet the needs of both the urban agriculturalist and the residential neighborhood where they live.

The two most precious gifts we can give our children are roots and wings. Miracles grow wherever you sow them.

Betty Jo Nash  
[bnash\\_reg5ffa@hotmail.com](mailto:bnash_reg5ffa@hotmail.com)

## Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)

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**From:** Daniel Albin <albinshireacres@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 21, 2014 11:27 AM  
**To:** Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)  
**Subject:** Re: Concerns

Re: Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development's Environmental Stewardship Division

To Whom It May Concern;

I would like to voice my concerns over the proposed changes dictating the inability to raise any number of animals where it is deemed residential [Category 4], as well as the proposed classification of the new non-production "Livestock Facilities".

I failed to see how a small number of chickens in a suburban back yard, fenced properly and maintained, could be an issue to any surrounding neighbors. If barking dogs and screaming children are allowed on residential property, I feel it is the right of all human kind to have the ability to both raise animals and farm the land, if properly maintained. No one enforces rules while the neighbor sitting in his driveway with radio blaring and waking up children. You mean to say that a maintained flock of chickens will cause more conflict than loud subwoofers? I disagree.

If you insist on devising rules to enforce these limitations, at least do it responsibly. A small flock of chickens (without any roosters) will make nearly no noise at all, and generate no smell. I can understand placing limitations on larger livestock (i.e. horses and cattle) however some review may be needed on how the land is currently zoned.

From the dawn of mankind we have been taming, raising and cultivating. There should be no laws in place that would prohibit the expression of our right as a culture to grow our own crops, raise our own food and tend to our animals, if done reasonably and responsibly.

In today's society with shootings and crime, I would not think it unfair to deny a child or adult the joy in seeing a crop come to fruition or an animal produce to feed your family. Do not remove their human and genetic right to work their land.

Please think carefully during these discussions as you may be hurting more small farms and families than you know.

Respectfully,

Daniel J. Albin

Albinshire Acres

**Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)**

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**From:** Heather McDougall <nourishingfarm@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 21, 2014 12:58 PM  
**To:** Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA); mikeshirkey@house.mi.gov  
**Subject:** Proposed GAAMP changes

Dear Government-

Leave GAAMP alone. These changes undermine the very protection put in place for our RIGHT TO FARM ACT. How many times do the people need to speak for you to hear us? Stay out of our backyards!

Sincerely,

Heather McDougall  
734-320-3722  
3701 Kalmbach Rd.  
Grass Lake, MI 49240

## **Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)**

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**From:** erenwick@att.net  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 21, 2014 1:02 PM  
**To:** Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)  
**Subject:** GAAMP changes

I oppose the proposed changes that bring operations as small as a single animal under the control of the Site Selection GAAMPs, and then using (a new category) to exclude those operations from Right to Farm protection in residential areas. Livestock production facilities should continue to be defined as 50 animal units or more, to avoid bringing small farm operations under the control of the Site Selection GAAMPs.

Thank you,  
Ellen Renwick  
17675 Heim Road  
Chelsea, MI 48118

## Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)

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**From:** Dennis Christensen <ilovelifelife245@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 21, 2014 1:06 PM  
**To:** Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)  
**Subject:** proposals to livestock production

Gentlemen , I am opposed to any changes in the MDARD,s proposals of the site selection and odor control for livestock production facilities , it defines a new term livestock facility { as one with an number of animals, / including a single animal} This is not acceptable and and I see this as the latest efforts by MDARD to restrict agricultural rights of the small farmer, There is no need for this! Control of the site selection is not acceptable either Thank you Dennis

## Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)

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**From:** David Lengemann <david.lengemann@trenaryducks.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 21, 2014 1:06 PM  
**To:** Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)  
**Subject:** Public Comment on Changes to GAAMPs

Hi,

I am a small pastured poultry egg operator in Trenary, Michigan with four 8' x 16' mobile hen houses, one acre of portable electric poultry fencing, 500 chickens, 100 ducks and a Great Pyrenees livestock guardian dog. During the Spring, Summer and Fall my operation uses abandoned fields for pasture. In the Winter I find a small, sheltered spot for the coops and animals. Some of these fields, including the six acre field I am currently on, are zoned residential even though they are obviously old farm fields in a rural location. The proposed changes to GAAMPs appear to restrict me from using these fields due to zoning, and I want to take issue with that.

My operation also provides many positive benefits to the environment. My poultry excrete manure which fertilizes the land more than depletes it, and the pasture is always mowed so as to promote tender grass growth. After my coops and fencing are moved to a new area, many forms of wildlife such as deer, turkeys, mice, rabbits, hawks, owls, etc. use these lush fields for food sources.

Please take into consideration that not all properties zoned residential would be detriments to public health if used for livestock.

Regards,

David Lengemann  
Trenary Ducks & More  
telephone: (906) 446-3126  
email: [sales@trenaryducks.com](mailto:sales@trenaryducks.com)  
website: [www.trenaryducks.com](http://www.trenaryducks.com)  
blog: [trenaryeggs.wordpress.com](http://trenaryeggs.wordpress.com)

## Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)

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**From:** Julia Byrne <juliabyrne@ymail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 21, 2014 1:11 PM  
**To:** Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)  
**Subject:** Michigan GAAMP

I understand that January 22nd, there will be a meeting in place to change the way residential farming works in Michigan. I have just heard about this in an Mlive article\* and the way the article reads to me is that due to minor complaints they are shutting down ALL small farms in residential areas. This doesn't feel right to me and I feel like I speak for everyone that this is a situation where you punish the entire group because of the mistakes of the few.

It doesn't even seem to matter how many farm animals a site has, no matter how minute, they want to erase the ability to raise your own livestock without having some kind of license. What this means is that they are choking the people of their option to be self sufficient. They are basically forcing the people to be dependent on being consumers rather than self producers. This is hurting more than just the state, this is killing humanity.

Please side with the people, Julia.

\* [http://www.mlive.com/news/kalamazoo/index.ssf/2014/01/hold\\_manure\\_pile\\_tweak\\_suggest.html](http://www.mlive.com/news/kalamazoo/index.ssf/2014/01/hold_manure_pile_tweak_suggest.html)

**Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)**

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**From:** xanadufarm2@gmail.com  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 21, 2014 1:26 PM  
**To:** Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)  
**Subject:** Keeping the right to farm act

I would like to keep my horse farm in the neighborhood it has been for the past 25 years. Adults & kids love to visit the horses & would not have have access to horses otherwise. Please keep the rules as they currently are.

Thank you,  
Sarah Carlyon

Sent from my iPhone

## Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)

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**From:** ben hicks <benhix66@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 21, 2014 1:28 PM  
**To:** Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)  
**Subject:** Residential Farming

hello my name is Ben Hicks. i live and farm in the Ann Arbor area. Any hindrance to local food production is detrimental to both the health of the members of the community as well as its economy. I believe it is important that any one be able to produce food where they live.

thank you

- Ben Hicks

## Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)

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**From:** Jennifer Springstead <jspringst@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 21, 2014 1:42 PM  
**To:** Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)  
**Subject:** Preserve Michigan's Right to Farm Act

I am opposed to the proposed changes to Right to Farm Act.

1. According to the law, changes to the GAAMPs should be based on scientific evidence; no evidence has been provided that supports the current changes to the Site Selection GAAMPs.
2. According to the law, changes to the GAAMPs should be for purposes of improved public health or the environment; no evidence has been provided that small farms in residentially zoned areas are a threat to public health or the environment.
3. The proposed changes create language in the GAAMPs that contradicts the language of the law (that is, the GAAMPs require zoning to regulate Livestock Facilities while the Law prohibits zoning from regulating them). While the Agriculture Commission has the authority to change the language of the GAAMPs, they do NOT have the authority to change the meaning of the law, and that is what this change attempts to do.

Thank You, Jennifer Springstead

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Jennifer Springstead  
Integrity Shows  
Live Green Fair  
Exhibitor One Stop  
734-604-8764

**Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)**

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**From:** Davies, Bradley A <davie1ba@cmich.edu>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 21, 2014 1:45 PM  
**To:** Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)  
**Subject:** Right to farm act

To whom it may concern,

This comment is in reference to GAAMP Site Selection and Odor Control for New and Expanding Livestock Facilities. Specific and acute regulation of local livestock should remain in the control of local authorities. One size fits all legislation does not represent local wishes for local communities. Essentially there is no difference between a small backyard flock of chickens and owning dogs or cats. Both aforementioned animals require diligence and care from the owner, negligence in these areas is already illegal and punishable. Again, leave local control over local animals to the local government that is elected by the community in question.

Thank you for your time,

Brad Davies

## Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)

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**From:** Kimberly Lindley <timburly@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 21, 2014 1:46 PM  
**To:** Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)  
**Subject:** Proposed 2014 GAAMPs

Dear Sir,

Although I do not currently have animals, I am planning on keeping chickens this spring. This new policy that you are looking to put in effect, would endanger my ability to do this. I am fully opposed to changing the rules for what size "farm" i run. We would only have 10 or so laying hens, but we are concerned about our liberty to do this being questioned.

I am opposed to these changes.

Concerned Citizen,  
Kimberly Lindley

## Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)

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**From:** Katherine Pyle <kpyle@comcast.net>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 21, 2014 1:50 PM  
**To:** Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)  
**Subject:** GAAMP Site Selection for new and expanding livestock- comment

My comments concern the GAAMP Site Selection and Odor Control for New and Existing Livestock Facilities, particularly the inclusion of Category 4. The regulation of sites should be left to city zoning ordinances rather than a state bureau. Lot size and livestock size can be taken into consideration on a local basis. Michigan's history of agriculture has not only been the larger farms, but the thousands of small family farms that grow food, keep chickens, rabbits, goats, other small animals for the purpose of providing wholesome food for their family. Most have more than sufficient land to accommodate the animals they keep. There are already rules on the books to prevent people from keeping too many animals, or too large of animals.

While the intent of this new rule would be to lesson conflict between small farms and new residential areas, the repercussions could be negative and unnecessary. It seems to me that Michigan, a largely rural state, would be better served supporting the 'family farm', rather than passing rules and regulations that make it impossible for people to be self- sufficient.

One more thought....Detroit has plans to raze certain areas of residential blight and create agricultural areas. It seems that the wording in Category 4 could be very problematic for moving forward with the revitalization of Detroit.

I am expressing my hope that the wording in Category 4 be removed, or changed so as not to be used as a means for shutting down small farms.

Respectfully,  
Katherine Pyle  
Plymouth, MI  
[kpyle@comcast.net](mailto:kpyle@comcast.net)

## Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)

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**From:** Laura Anderson <aaronlaura04@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 21, 2014 1:58 PM  
**To:** Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)  
**Subject:** backyard chicken owner concerned

I am concerned that I will be forced to get rid of my healthy chickens I currently keep legally in my backyard. I follow good practices in keeping my coop clean and free of disease. My disabled daughter also uses 2 of our chickens as therapy animals and they have been trained and registered as therapy animals.

I would ask that you keep the current definition of a Livestock facility to those with 50 or more animals and leave small farmers alone. Our chickens do not hurt anyone and no one in our surrounding area has ever complained about our chickens. In fact they often come over to see if we have any extra eggs to trade and play with the chickens. I strongly believe that small farms are the back bone of america and need to be protected from over regulation.

Again I urge you to only impose increased regulations on those Livestock facilities with 50 or more animals.

Thank you.

Laura Anderson

## Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)

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**From:** rebecca bell <rebeccabell17@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 21, 2014 2:08 PM  
**To:** Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)  
**Subject:** New GAAMPS

Hello--

This is my request as a citizen of our lovely state and the owner of a couple of chickens and dairy goats, that new guidelines bringing all small numbers of livestock under state oversight, and declaring all residential zoned areas as unsuitable for livestock, be abandoned forthwith! Thank you!

Rebecca Bell  
Kalamazoo, MI

Sent from my iPad

## Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)

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**From:** Todd Carlin <tscarlin@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 21, 2014 2:31 PM  
**To:** Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)  
**Subject:** Right to farm.

Leave us alone. We the people don't need overreaching government officials running a free peoples lives, By what right do you think you can tell small farms they can't be. Try.Try helping the regular guy.

Todd Carlin

## Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)

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**From:** amy bem <prettytrolley@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 21, 2014 2:40 PM  
**To:** Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)  
**Subject:** no more farm animals in residential neighborhoods...

to whom it may concern,  
i am completely against this. i personally do not have animals, but live in a neighborhood where there are chickens and they are not bothersome in the least bit. i am also friends with people who raise chickens and other animals and they are respectful of their neighbors and also share the bounty of their flocks. i am appalled that there is even time to debate such a thing when there are more important things to deal with. |

thank you for your time,

amy bem

detroit, michigan

## Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)

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**From:** Gretchen Palmer <gretchensings@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 21, 2014 2:08 PM  
**To:** Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)  
**Subject:** Please let us keep our chickens!

We are a low income family of 5, living on a large property (4+) acres, totally appropriate for our ducks and chickens. Now, I completely understand how a ROOSTER could be a total nuisance, but our chickens? They are so tame, so quiet, they eat our table scraps and give us eggs year-round which we share with neighbors as they have need. FAR less annoying that our neighbors yipping dog who barks all the time, or that random house cat that is always wandering our property, we have no idea who it belongs to... Chickens provide for our family and our neighbors so much more than they take away! My children love them.

Our chickens:

1. Save us money by providing food
2. Improve healthy eating with fresh, healthy eggs
3. Decrease waste by consuming table scraps
4. Do not make any noise that can be heard beyond our property
5. Provide income when we sell the eggs we cannot use ourselves
6. Are beloved by our children, and neighbor children

Please reconsider banning hens!  
Sincerely,  
Gretchen Palmer  
MOM in Michigan

## Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)

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**From:** lana fisher <lanarick66@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 21, 2014 1:42 PM  
**To:** Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)  
**Subject:** purposed revisions to GAAMP

I am against any new restriction or regulation of individual rights to raise small animals to supplement diet. Knowing the source and how an animal was raised is clearly more important these days of commercially contaminated products. I believe a few well raised chickens, goats or what ever is a beifit to the community. The new purposed regulations are wrong and I am against them. Please protect or persona;l freedoms and vote against this restriction.

Yours, Registered Voter,

Lana Fisher

307 spring st

three rivers, mi 49093

## **Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)**

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**From:** Rokko <rokko@alaricjans.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 21, 2014 1:37 PM  
**To:** Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)  
**Subject:** right to grow food

Americans have always had the right to grow food, and feed their families. It is hard to believe that this right might be rescinded!

Please support the right for all of us—no matter where we live—to have control of our food production. We need more local farming, not less!

Thank you,

Sincerely,  
Rokko Jans  
3731 Wequas Rd  
Gaylord, MI 49735

## Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)

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**From:** Stuart Denney <aethrwolf@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 21, 2014 2:50 PM  
**To:** Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)  
**Subject:** in reference to GAAMP Site Selection and Odor Control for New and Expanding Livestock Facilities

Proposed GAAMP (General Acceptable Agricultural and Management Practices) DRAFT categories "Site Selection and Odor Control for New and Expanding Livestock Facilities" has proposed the new Category 4 and added the definition livestock facility.

Definition on page 3:

"Livestock Facility – Any facility where farm animals as defined in the Right to Farm Act are confined regardless of the number of animals. Sites such as loafing areas, confinement areas, or feedlots which have any number of livestock that preclude a predominance of desirable forage species are considered a part of a livestock facility."

POINT 1: What is a desirable forage species and who sets that definition?

POINT 2: by using the phrase "any number of animals" this will close off the option for the growing trend toward small numbers (2-6) of chickens raised in a back yard situation.

Wording on page 12 that states:

"Category 4 Sites are sites that are exclusively zoned for residential use and are not acceptable locations for livestock facilities regardless of number. Confining livestock in these locations does not conform to the Siting GAAMP."

The wording in this totally neuters the intent of the RTFA to protect farms from urban sprawl by allowing municipalities to simply re zone property as residential to put a farm operation out of business. In addition to that, these changes will possibly remove the ability of many people to keep non standard pets (primarily fur bearing types such as rabbits, chinchillas and ferrets, but including larger reptiles of any species raised for their hides and probably many other "exotic" type pets such as sugar gliders, any fish used in a commercial setting in addition to being sold as pets). Making ANY site unacceptable by zoning opens far too many doors for governmental abuse causing financial loss to people already financially strapped enough to need to raise their own food or having allergies to chemicals used in commercial food processing as well as causing needless emotional pain at losing the ability to keep pets that many may have had for many years.

To close:

Currently Michigan's RTF is praised in the farming and homesteading community on a national level for its ability to protect the small farms and the way it overrides local ordinances to do so. This BRINGS IN people looking to move to a locale where they can pursue their goals. Please don't change that at a time when so many people have left the state.

Stuart A. Denney  
Wylde Hare Rabbitry  
Battle Creek, MI  
Silver Fox, Giant Chinchilla, and Standard Rex rabbits  
Breeder of the NSFRC 2012 Silver Fox Nationals Best Opposite Sex of Breed buck  
(269)578-6234

## Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)

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**From:** Paul Germeroth <paul.germeroth@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 21, 2014 2:53 PM  
**To:** Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)  
**Subject:** Comment on the MDARD Management proposed change

### Michigan Department of Agriculture & Rural Development Environmental Stewardship Division

I am saddened and angered by the proposal to eliminate my right to keep chickens.

Roughly two years ago, the city of Ferndale passed an ordinance to allow people in the city to keep up to three hens (no roosters) in your yard with city guidelines on how to legally keep them. I was very excited to find this out. As a person who believes in the idea of sustainable living and urban farming, I jumped at the chance to start my own flock. I actually talked to each of my neighbors and not one had an issue with me setting up a coop in my backyard.

I did the proper research and built my coop responsibly. It is completely rodent-free and is extremely clean at all times. My neighbors have never complained once about my birds and love the eggs that I share with them. I have asked all of them from time to time if there have been any issues and I have never had one complaint. I am very proud and love my birds. I treat them like immediate pets and would be very upset if I was ever told to get rid of them.

I understand that there are bad apples in any situation, be it rural farming or a backyard farming situation (whether livestock or product) but it is upsetting to hear that our state government is now proposing to take the rights away from everyone to farm. THIS IS ABSURD!!

I am completely against this excessive governing proposal of regulation of farm animals.

Please consider my comments for this upcoming regulatory change.

Sincerely,

Paul Germeroth  
419 E. Lewiston  
Ferndale, Mi 48220

## Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)

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**From:** Susan Reed <susan.reed1004@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 21, 2014 2:58 PM  
**To:** Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)  
**Subject:** the GAAMPs should protect urban, suburban, and rural small scale farms

Dear M. Wilcox:

Please protect urban, suburban and rural small scale farms. Local units of government are capable of addressing these issues with their zoning processes. I live in a neighborhood where a few years ago, a pit bull killed a baby. My next-door neighbor's giant dog rages every time my children step outside. So you can see why seems absurd to me that I wouldn't be allowed to get a little chicken to teach my children responsibility, husbandry, and the pleasure of a good fresh egg for breakfast, because of GAAMPs changes even though my city would otherwise allow it. Urban agriculture is one of the most exciting and vibrant and positive movements happening in our state today. Please respect the small-scale right to farm.

Sincerely,

Susan E. Reed  
1004 Parker Ave  
Kalamazoo, MI 49008

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Susan Reed 269.329.9294

## Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)

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**From:** Marvin Darling <darlingmarvin@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 21, 2014 3:10 PM  
**To:** Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)  
**Subject:** GAAMPs

We are opposed to the new GAAMPS regulations that we feel will be a violation of our rights to have pet animals on our property. The regulation of family pets should fall to the townships or cities. We have had prized pheasants and other birds on our property as pets. If our neighbors would have objected to them we would have been the people to address their concerns. The State agencies should not interfere with the rights of the home owners to raise pet animals. If they want this rule they should outlaw outside cats and dogs also.

Marvin & Louise Darling  
7210 West H Ave  
Kalamazoo, MI

## Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)

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**From:** Sherry Thackrey <sherryajt@comcast.net>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 21, 2014 3:27 PM  
**To:** Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)  
**Subject:** GAAMP Changes

Greetings.

I learned of possible changes to the current code and hope that it will not bind or strangle efforts to reconnect Michiganders to their food sources and community small farms.

Over the past few years, it's been inspiring to read that large cities throughout the nation -- New York, Portland, Seattle, Halifax, Vancouver, LA, etc -- allow for backyard chickens and are encouraging urban gardens, even on top of tall buildings! Michigan cities need to follow the new trend that is reconnecting people to healthy ways of supplying their families with clean meat and fresh home grown vegetables.

It is my hope that the committee will spur this type of growth forward and join the large urban areas around the country. Surely, we don't want people to see Michigan -- such an agricultural haven -- as a backward controlling state where new and modern activities are seen as negative threats.

I've read that young people, especially, are invigorated with urban gardening, being small farmers themselves, and learning how to raise small animals and fowl. Let us encourage this in our young people. I fear if we legislate and bind practices too heavily, these young minds and hearts will move out of the state. Haven't we lost too many of our young people already?

In the Dallas/Fort Worth area of Texas, where I recently vacationed, there is an enthusiastic embrace of urban gardens and animals -- such as the cities above. I was delighted to see the evidence of this. So, it was disheartening to return to Michigan only to read of possible changes that might severely limit the freedom for people to have animals (chickens, especially) and other urban farming practices.

Please keep Michigan in the forefront of the emerging and energizing move that places people closer to clean food sources, helps to establish and grow our Farmer's Markets and to help us realize that food is a matter of individual and family security. If there are individual problems in communities, no doubt local councils and the people can work these matters out.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,

Sherry Thackrey  
Dexter, MI

## Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)

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**From:** Steve Petrovich <petro@shooterz.biz>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 21, 2014 12:00 PM  
**To:** Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)  
**Subject:** MDARD and new GAAMPs

Dear Sir,

I am completely against this excessive governing proposal of regulation of farm animals. This is a slippery slope for freedom and individual rights. Whats next, overregulation of horses, dogs, cats, gardens, etc?

I would favor livestock limits in Non-Ag areas, but to completely over-regulate and deny someone wanting a few chickens is Un-American.

Please consider my comments for this upcoming regulatory change.

Sincerely,

Steve Petrovich  
32880 Raphael Rd  
Farmington Hills, Mi 48336.

P.S.

I Also own property in Hadley, MI which I plan to retire at and want to have a small self sustainable farm.

## **Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)**

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**From:** kim@cassidyinc.com  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 21, 2014 3:44 PM  
**To:** Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)  
**Subject:** MDARD Public Comments

Dear R Wilcox,

Please accept this email as a statement of public comment regarding the proposed 2014 GAAMP changes.

I WOULD REQUEST THAT THE "LIVESTOCK PRODUCTION FACILITIES" DESIGNATION OF HAVING 50 ANIMAL UNITS OR MORE BE THE UNCHANGED UNIT NUMBER.

PLEASE CONTINUE TO DEFINE PEOPLE WITH 50 ANIMAL UNITS OR LESS TO NOT HAVE THE SITE SELECTION GAAMPs APPLY TO THESE SMALL FARMS.

THERE IS NO NEED FOR THE STATE TO IMPOSE THESE STANDARDS FOR SMALL FAMILY RUN FARMS. THE RESULT OF ANY CHANGE WOULD MAKE AN UPDUE BURDEN ON THE FAMILIES AND ALSO ON THE PRIVACY OF THESE FAMILIES.

CURRENTLY, THERE IS A MOVEMENT TO BACKYARD PENS FOR FAMILIES TO RAISE CHICKENS EVEN IN RURAL AREAS AS A MEANS TO GUARANTEE FRESH FOOD AND SAFE FOOD FOR THEIR FAMILIES. (TAKE ROYAL OAK FOR EXAMPLE) WITH MANY ECONOMIC PROBLEMS IN THIS STATE, WE DO NOT NEED TO MAKE THIS LIFESTYLE MORE COMPLICATED TO FAMILIES THAT CHOOSE TO PUT THE TIME, AND EFFORT INTO THEIR BACKYARD ENDEAVOR. FAMILIES BENEFIT FROM THIS WHOLESOME ENDEAVOR AND I ENCOURAGE THE RIGHT TO FARM PROTECTION SHOULD APPLY TO RESIDENTIAL AREAS.

WITH DEVELOPMENT AND EXPANDED URBAN DWELLINGS ENCROACHING ON FARM FAMILIES, WE DO NOT NEED TO PLACE ANOTHER BURDEN TO DRIVE OUT WHAT LOCAL PRODUCTION AND FACILITIES WE DO HAVE. RATHER, WE NEED TO ENCOURAGE THESE FAMILIES BY NOT INFRINGING ON THEIR LAND USE AND MAKING THE SIMPLE TASK OF RAISING AND KEEPING ANIMALS ON THEIR PROPERTY ANY MORE COMPLICATED OR OVER REGULATED.

Thank you for your time and attention,

Kim Small  
2097 Addaleen  
Highland, MI 48357

## Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)

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**From:** Gavin Gillespie <gnivag@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 21, 2014 4:14 PM  
**To:** Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)  
**Subject:** legislation limiting back yard farming

I am writing in opposition to any legislation that targets residential farmers or homesteaders. I believe that your neighbourhood does dictate what is acceptable and what is not acceptable through association and local ordinances. Legislation that seeks to impose on the citizen's right in the pursuit of their happiness should not be infringed upon. Any decisions that impact local populations directly without offence to the State should be decided by those local ordinances. Thank you for this consideration and please do your best to resist any measures that threaten our ability to live as we choose and to know exactly where our food comes from.

Sincerely,

Gavin Gillespie

## Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)

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**From:** Lucy Sullivan <luc1354sul@aol.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 21, 2014 4:16 PM  
**To:** Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)  
**Subject:** Sierra Club Member Opinion

Dear Committee Member,

I cannot attend the meeting tomorrow and want to voice my concern over my tax dollars being used to support factory farms which for the most part disregard both animal welfare and environmental safety. I stand in favor of leveling the playing field and want my tax dollars used more fairly to support sustainable agriculture and humane animal practices.

Thank you for the opportunity to e-mail my concerns.

Regards,

Lucy Sullivan  
62290 Arlington Circle #1  
South Lyon, MI 48178

## **Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)**

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**From:** Mary Bann <mary@marybann.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 21, 2014 4:31 PM  
**To:** Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)  
**Subject:** I am very concerned about the possible change to the Michigan Right to Farm Act!!

The residents of Michigan should have the right to farm as they always have. There is no reason that this should change without a vote from the people.

I hope that our rights are not being taken away!!!

Mary Bann  
42744 Shortridge  
Sterling Heights, MI 48314

## Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)

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**From:** Ken D. Orlich <kdorlich@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 21, 2014 4:36 PM  
**To:** Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)  
**Subject:** let us keep our chickens!

Good Afternoon.

I'll be very brief. I don't have any chickens myself but I love knowing that the eggs I get from friends come from unabused, well fed, and happy chickens. I REFUSE to eat ANYTHING from a factory farm and the trend of this attitude is GROWING. DO NOT move Michigan backwards on this progressive issue. The People need to ensure our own food independence away from unsafe and unethical corporate control more and more.

Its time you realized that we The People have a right to be in charge of what goes on out plates.

Thanks for your time.

--

Ken D. Orlich

Peace.

## Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)

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**From:** lounies@comcast.net  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 21, 2014 4:44 PM  
**To:** Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)  
**Subject:** MRTFA!

We are firm believers of our ability to sustain ourselves and our neighbors we have a small city homestead and raise chickens on a very small scale. Our neighbors love them and all the neighborhood kids come and see "their" chicken. We not only are planning on being very active in 4H but they provide learning and income for our family. I flat out will not being seeing our birds go anywhere as they help provide food and income in a very bad economy. I would ask that this be reconsidered and if there is an individual issue it be dealt with as such. We have had problem with stay dogs and cats then people will ever have from my birds.

Annie Jelinek

## Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)

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**From:** Laura Kujacznski <laurakujacznski@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 21, 2014 4:55 PM  
**To:** Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)  
**Subject:** Opposition to GAAMPs changes

Hello,

My name is Laura Kujacznski. I am writing to inform you of my strong opposition to the proposed changes to GAAMPs. I think small scale farming is a proud and healthy part of our country's heritage and an enduring part of our personal freedom as land-owners. Please vote against these changes.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Laura Kujacznski

269-352-4499

10445 East D. Ave  
Richland Mi

Sent from my iPhone

## Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)

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**From:** Mark McCarthy <mastermccarthy@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 22, 2014 12:29 PM  
**To:** Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)  
**Subject:** Rite to Fram

Michigan's outstanding diverse agricultural heritage, and blossoming future would be put at risk with overly broad changes to the GAAMP.

Please be conservative with any modifications!

I am an active citizen and Voter! 48322

Mr. Mark E. McCarthy

## Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)

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**From:** Catherine Astalos <catherineastalos@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 22, 2014 12:05 PM  
**To:** Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)  
**Subject:** Michigan Right to Farm Act

Please keep the bill as is. The reason for changing it is not valid as owners already have limits that are acceptable. This is America. We want to keep our liberties. We don't want a nanny state! Thank you.

Catherine Astalos  
313.617.7511

## Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)

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**From:** M'Lynn Hartwell <mlynn@traversearea.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 22, 2014 12:00 PM  
**To:** Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)  
**Subject:** Right to Farm

When I was growing up, we called organic food what it was, "food." We grew what we ate, and we grew our food where we lived. Industrial agriculture was a crazy and unimaginable idea. Now, if I understand correctly, family farms, often growing organic foods, leading to food security, near our communities is under assault. To me the idea of challenging a Right to Farm seems absurd to the extreme. People have always, and should always be able to grow, trade, and sell food from family farms without the burdens placed upon corporations and industrial scaled agribusinesses.

If we want true food security — defined as the ability of a country, region, state or community to be as self-sufficient in food production as possible — then we need a legal system that supports local, small-scale food production.

Local Family Farms that have traditional fit well within the parameter of Right to Farm bills. Our local farmers turn out healthful food, guard against shortages, stabilize local economies and instill community camaraderie.

Michigan is ahead of the curve when it comes to setting up legal protections for small-scale farmers, and the state's Right to Farm laws are making a real difference.

Do NOT gut the Right to Farm Act by giving local zoning ordinances the power to control where farming can happen. This change would violate the language and intent of the Right to Farm Act.

The Michigan RTFA is a template for the defense and encouragement of local food production and the restoration of agriculture to its rightful place — integrated into communities.

Respectfully Yours,  
Rev. M'Lynn Hartwell  
Traverse City, Michigan

## Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)

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**From:** Heather Seifert <heavenly\_helper2005@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 22, 2014 4:59 PM  
**To:** Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)  
**Subject:** Michigan Right to Farm Act

Greetings,

I am writing tonight to let the board know how I feel about the proposed changes via GAAMP on site selection and section/ category 4 which would exclude those farming in residential areas. First off I attended the public meeting today and I will be at the next meeting where the actual counsel will be in attendance. I heard story after story of how legally small farms have fought using the MI Right to Farm Act and how those cases and cases like them in the future would no longer be protected. This is common sense folks that the proposed changes are not only biased but are completely unnecessary. As written these changes are absurd. I feel that the time spent writing these seriously flawed 33 pages could have been better used!

I feel also that it is an overstep for the committee to have this legislative power handed down to them.

Please know that even though there was little time and coverage on this serious long effecting issue that we are getting the word out and that we will not allow these changes to get passed through without people knowing the seriousness and impact it will have on many farmers and consumers.

Signed by a future farmer who believes that the Michigan Right to Farm Act is perfect as written!

Heather Seifert

Currently a resident in Roseville looking for land in the country.

Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android

## Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)

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**From:** Richard Winkel <richardcwinkel@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 22, 2014 5:00 PM  
**To:** Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)  
**Cc:** Leslie Winkel  
**Subject:** Public Input on Agricultural Management Practices

It is 5 ;minutes to 5PM. The last chance for public comment.  
I just learned of this issue.

I have been struggling to bring my "small" farm to profitability for 20 years.

No time for careful reading now, but what I saw mentions issues with "Hobby Farms". That is to the best of my knowledge an undefined term.

Please do not throw the citizens of Michigan to the mercy of every township board in the state. We do not need any chaos added to the mix.

Let's come to a uniform statewide position, then apply it fairly and equitably.

Regards,  
Richard Winkel  
Winkel Chestnut Farm & Nursery  
Ottawa County Michigan

**Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)**

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**From:** Grace Potts <grace.potts@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 22, 2014 4:59 PM  
**To:** Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)  
**Subject:** Right to Farm

Everyone in MI has a right to farm. Please don't restrict livestock in residential areas further.

Thank you-  
Grace Potts  
Saginaw

**Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)**

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**From:** Micah Peet <micah.peet@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 22, 2014 4:58 PM  
**To:** Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)  
**Subject:** proposed changes to GAAMP

Ms Wilcox,

These proposed changes are distressing. They are also unclear and arbitrary. I have a small farm (7 acres) currently zoned for agriculture. However, even as rural as we are, civilization constantly encroaches. The land across the road from us is currently zoned residential. This land includes farmland used for seed corn production. If I am reading this legislation correctly, I would need to have a setback of at least 125 feet, in case the smell of my chickens bothers the corn! There is no such similar protection for my sense of smell (livestock aren't the only things that stink sometimes). Fertilizers and pesticides smell horrible and are dangerous, yet only livestock need to meet these arbitrary setbacks. With only 7 acres, a significant amount of our land would be unusable. In addition, as the sprawl encroaches, the townships will be under increasing pressure to change zoning to residential uses. This is exactly what the Right to Farm Act was meant to prevent!

While I am in support of a distinction between small farms and CAFOs, I feel these changes are poorly thought out and unclear. I sincerely hope that you take them back to the drawing board after hearing our concerns.

Thank you,

Micah Peet  
59945 Holtom Rd  
Centreville, MI  
49032

(269) 330-8143

**Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)**

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**From:** Jason Mittlestat <jsmittle@up.net>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 22, 2014 4:58 PM  
**To:** Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)  
**Subject:** GAAMP Comment

I would like to comment on the proposed change to the Site Selection GAAMP with regards do changing the definition to include sites where animals "are confined regardless of the number of animals." This change in definition from the current use of "animal units" to any amount of animals becomes damaging to property owners with the proposed creation of "Category 4" by saying that these areas are no acceptable to livestock. This change would allow government to take away the ability of property owners to produce their own food.

I do not believe these proposed changes reflect the original intention of Michigan's Right to Farm Act. Michigan is known as an agricultural state. If these changes are passed they would result in limitations to the creation of new farm business and would greatly restrict the ability of people to grow their own food.

I object to the proposed removal of the use of "animal units" and object to the creation of a "Category 4".

Thank you for your time.

Jason Mittlestat  
33254 Paavola Road  
Pelkie, MI 49958

**Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)**

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**From:** Hagen Family <thehagens@sbcglobal.net>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 22, 2014 4:57 PM  
**To:** Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)  
**Subject:** MI GAAMP changes

On behalf of Oakland County Poultry Club, we would like to express our concerns with possible changes to Michigan's GAAMP. The changes that are being considered will severely restrict the rights of Michigan farmers, particularly small scale farmers. As a supporter of Michigan 4H and farmers in general, we would like to bring to your attention that often times it is the simple "backyard" experience and connection with animals that creates the wonderful lifelong understanding and responsibility of animal ownership. Please do not make any changes and jeopardize the wonderful experience that so many 4H children receive from being able to raise a few chickens, goats or rabbits in their own backyard.

Thank you, John Hagen  
Ortonville, MI

## Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)

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**From:** Christina Jackson <pinkskis@chartermi.net>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 22, 2014 4:55 PM  
**To:** Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)  
**Subject:** MI right to farm act

We must support our local Michigan farmers. Knowing where my food comes from and the people behind its production is important to me. Smaller farms generally produce healthier, safer food for Michigan families. Lets support the individual rights our country was founded on.

Thanks  
Christy

Sent from my iPhone

## **Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)**

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**From:** Brooke Isham <brookenichole23@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 22, 2014 4:53 PM  
**To:** MDA-Ag-Commission; Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)  
**Subject:** Please Oppose Proposed GAAMP Changes!

Dear members of the Michigan Commission of Agriculture & Rural Development:

Allow me to start off by saying I love our small farms in Michigan! I believe most small farms are more focused on healthy, humane, environmentally and community minded practices than Big Agricultural farms. My husband and I also love raising chickens. It allows us to know where exactly our eggs/chicken comes from (i.e., that our chickens have been treated with great care and respect, fed a diet focused on nutrition rather than cost, etc.), connect with our food for a deeper appreciation, and have peace-of-mind that the food we raise is greatly benefitting us and those who eat it. However, the proposed changes to the GAAMPs would conflict the Michigan Right To Farm Act causing small farmers (even folks with urban backyard chickens (like myself) or bee keepers) to no longer be permitted to raise animals for food or bees for honey and/or to pollination.

Please understand that these proposed GAAMP changes are in direct conflict with the Michigan Right-to-Farm Act (which was created to protect and encourage small farms and boost the economy). In addition I humbly request that you oppose the proposed changes to the GAAMPs.

Sincerely,  
Brooke Isham  
430 W Park Street  
Marquette, MI 49855  
[brookenichole23@yahoo.com](mailto:brookenichole23@yahoo.com)

**Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)**

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**From:** Holton, Jennifer (MDA)  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 22, 2014 4:53 PM  
**To:** Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)  
**Subject:** FW: Support for Family Farming!

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**From:** Liz Waters [<mailto:liz@trinityphotodetroit.com>]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 22, 2014 4:30 PM  
**To:** Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA); Holton, Jennifer (MDA)  
**Subject:** Support for Family Farming!

I am writing in regards to the Michigan Right to Farm act Proposed changes. I own 19 chickens on 1 acre and they keep our family and neighbors stocked with farm fresh eggs from healthy hens (no roosters) with no hormones, antibiotics, or pesticides. My 4 children eat eggs daily and we would not be able to afford to purchase eggs of this quality for my family to eat. These are not only our source of food, but also our pets. They serve a great purpose, have a great life and are loved by a family. To take this right away from any family who is following proper protocol and keeping the animals healthy and happy, would be CRIMINAL. Please do NOT change the Michigan Right to Farm Act that protects not only my family's right to farm our property, but also protects the animals from horrible factory farming conditions! Thank you for your consideration.

Elizabeth Waters  
Ortonville, MI

## Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)

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**From:** hether.jf@gmail.com on behalf of hether jonna frayer <hether@freshfoodfairy.org>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 22, 2014 4:52 PM  
**To:** Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)  
**Subject:** DO NOT CHANGE GAAMPS to outlaw farm animals in residential neighborhoods!

I am writing in opposition to proposed changes in the GAAMPs that will outlaw farm animals in residential neighborhoods.

As an urban farmer I take pride in the great services that I can provide to my family and friends in the form of healthy local food. I can take pride that the food that I produce is produced in a sustainable, healthful, and respectful manner. It is a great experience for our kids to understand how to raise animals and to know where their food is coming from, as well as all the kids in the neighborhood that enjoy spending time in our yard.

As a chicken owner I can verify that my small flock is quiet, clean and productive. We live in harmony with our neighbors and share our knowledge freely with all.

The right to produce healthful and sustainable food should be a part of all communities. Legislation should be designed to expand, not limit urban agriculture.

The local food movement is a huge part of our state's food security which will only make Michigan stronger and a more desirable place to live.

Thank you,  
Hether Frayer

fresh food fairy  
encouraging good nutrition by making fresh food fun!  
[www.freshfoodfairy.org](http://www.freshfoodfairy.org)  
[269.598.6857](tel:269.598.6857)

## Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)

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**From:** Diana Jancek <dijaan1@charter.net>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 22, 2014 4:55 PM  
**To:** Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)  
**Subject:** Comments re Proposed Changes to GAAMPS

January 22, 2014

Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development

Environmental Stewardship Division

P.O. Box 30017, Lansing, MI 48909

RE: Public Comment, Rhonda Wilcox - [WilcoxR2@michigan.gov](mailto:WilcoxR2@michigan.gov)

Proposed changes to GAAMP (General Acceptable Agricultural and Management Practices) DRAFT categories "Site Selection and Odor Control for New and Expanding Livestock Facilities" and the proposed new Category 4 and added definition livestock facility.

To whom it may concern:

Sweetwater Local Foods Market of Muskegon, MI, its board and its farmers, are opposed to the proposed changes to Michigan's Right to Farm Act specifically in the category "Site Selection and Odor Control for New and Expanding Livestock Facilities" and the proposed new Category 4 and added definition livestock facility.

We are particularly concerned with the wording that states:

"Category 4 Sites are sites that are exclusively zoned for residential use and are not acceptable locations for livestock facilities regardless of number. Confining livestock in these locations does not conform to the Siting GAAMP."

We also object to the Michigan's townships Definition on page 3:

"Livestock Facility – Any facility where farm animals as defined in the Right to Farm Act are confined regardless of the number of animals.

We believe that as written, these changes do not account for the wide variance in lot sizes in townships throughout the state of Michigan. In some areas, lot sizes as large as 50 acres would be deemed "not acceptable for livestock".

We believe these changes would hobble the growing local food movement particularly concerning backyard chicken & egg raising at the very time when more encouragement from the state is needed.

Sincerely,

Diana Jancek,

Market Manager & Farmer

Sweetwater Local Foods Market

## **Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)**

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**From:** Lish@growsharefeed.org  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 22, 2014 2:14 PM  
**To:** Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)  
**Subject:** Do not change Site Selection GAAMP

To the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development,

I write to you today to assert that you must not change your "Generally accepted agricultural and management practices" (GAAMPs) of "Site Selection" to impact agricultural operations that are zoned residential. It is imperative and urgent that you do not make this change.

Two very important considerations apply here. First, this change is unjustifiable.

You cannot alter the Right to Farm Act. According to the law, changes to GAAMPs must be based on scientific evidence. No evidence has been provided. Changes to the GAAMPs should be for purposes of improved public health or the environment and there is no evidence of these conditions. Also, the proposed changes to the GAAMPs contradicts the language of the Law and you do not have the authority to change the meaning of the law.

The second important consideration is logical need. Michigan citizens who have taken it upon themselves to grow food and/or have livestock, should not be penalized simply due to zoning. Small farms improve the local economy. They stave off uncertainty for the whole community. In a free market, they stave off uncertainty for the State and beyond.

Logical need clearly shows that residential farms are vital for many reasons\* as they:

**-Improve the local economy, which can reach State-wide**

Michigan needs jobs and the national agriculture system needs Michigan

**-Improve public health**

75% of the National cost of healthcare is spent on chronic "lifestyle" diseases that can be prevented by eating healthy food.

**-Provide jobs**

**-Provide healthy alternatives to corporate farmed-food with high antibiotics and other additives**

It is a public health issue that people are developing infections that are resistant to all antibiotics. It has been determined that a contributing factor is the antibiotics in corporate-farmed meats.

**-Give hedge to an uncertain food system**

This month, January, 2014, California declared a state of extreme drought. They provide the majority of winter vegetables to the nation and are preparing summer growing now. What might this mean to Michigan as an opportunity for growth? What does this mean to Michigan citizens if we do not respond?

**-Can dramatically improve the environment**

When organic methods are used, particularly those that give back to the soil, such as with permaculture

**-Serve the underserved**

Residential farms are found in church lots, backyards, abandoned lots, and anywhere people can grow food. They give food to their neighbors, their parishioners, to local food banks and others in need. They help people who cannot afford to buy healthy food with food stamps. They supply healthy food in areas that do not readily sell fresh food in their stores, such as what we find in Detroit or Pontiac. They share skills and teach their community and set an example of fellowship. Frankly, this movement in Detroit is literally saving lives!

**-Are therapeutic and improve social consciousness**

Organizations like the US Department of Veterans Affairs are instituting therapies around growing food and are implementing gardens. Places like the Charlevoix jail improve recidivism and increase social awareness and responsibility by having their inmates tend gardens. Hospitals are beginning to grow their own food. This is all forward movement. Do not move Michigan backward!

(\*All of these facts are well substantiated, please contact me if you would like the references. I'd be happy to hold a seminar on these issues to further educate.)

I began a business last year that is dedicated to helping others learn to grow healthy food anywhere—on a windowsill, on a patio, in the crack of a sidewalk. Food is health. Fresh, organic vegetables, fruit and meats are truly the key to what ails us. Transforming the way we eat and relate to food can radically improve public health. Countless Michigan citizens do similar work—work that gives back to all of us and to the local economy! Do not tie their hands or worse, end their or my livelihood, simply because we happen to have land that is zoned residential.

For all the reasons stated here and more, you must not make these proposed GAAMP changes and impact farming on residential land nor the Right to Farm Law.

Thank you for your time and for doing the right thing. Do not make these Site Selection GAAMP changes that negatively impact all of us.

Sincerely,

Alicia Brown  
[lish@growsharefeed.org](mailto:lish@growsharefeed.org)

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Permaculture. Pass it on.

"Mitakuye Oyasin," Lakota/Sioux for "All My Relations" - Live your day knowing we are all one.

**Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)**

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**From:** MDA-Ag-Commission  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 23, 2014 11:22 AM  
**To:** Wilcox, Rhonda (MDA)  
**Cc:** MDA-Ag-Commission  
**Attachments:** GAAMPs Comments to Commission Mailbox.pdf

Rhonda,

Attached are comments received prior to 5:00 p.m., January 22, 2014, in the Ag Commission mailbox relative to the proposed 2014 GAAMPs.

Please incorporate these into the official record of comments received.

Thx!

Cheri

**From:** [Joseph Scanlan](#)  
**To:** [MDA-Ag-Commission](#); [hansfarm@up.net](#); [jalapeno@cybersol.com](#); [vvp@casair.net](#); [bkennedy@abqco.net](#); [Wilcox, Rhonda \(MDA\)](#)  
**Subject:** Comment regarding proposed changes to Site Selection GAAMPs  
**Date:** Wednesday, January 22, 2014 10:09:10 AM

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**Commissioners:**

Without actually amending the RTFA, amending or changing site selection GAAMPs (any GAAMP, really) are moot. Without legislative action, the intent of the RTFA will remain the same, despite MDARD changing or amending voluntary guidance practices such as GAAMPs.

As a professional community planner and being personally involved with local food policy regulations and planning here in the Upper Peninsula, I understand the increasing pressure from communities throughout the state for MDARD to clarify RTFA protection in urban areas under 100,000 in population and residential zones. But the proposed language submitted by your commission to amend the site selection GAAMPs is insufficient and allows for much uncertainty and perhaps even greater confusion without amending the actual RTFA.

I suggest you abandoned these proposed changes to the site selection GAAMPs.

Sincerely,

Joseph P. Scanlan  
358 Genesee Street  
Marquette, Michigan 49855