



Help Save Our Small Abattoirs

Local Abattoirs are Crucial for the Local Food Movement

The **Perth/Oxford Local of the National Farmers Union** has a long standing interest in the survival of small, locally-owned and operated, provincially-inspected abattoirs in our community and across Ontario. Small, multi-species abattoirs are essential to the survival of family farms and rural communities.

The Loss of Small Abattoirs:

Small abattoirs across the province are struggling to survive for a variety of reasons. However, lack of demand for their services is not one of them - most small abattoirs and small meat processors say they are busier than ever. Some small abattoirs in the Perth/Oxford area are planning to close in the near future and others are questioning how long they can continue to operate.

No Local Meat without Small Abattoirs:

There is widespread and growing support for local food from all levels of government, and from farmers, chefs, culinary tourists, small retailers and the general public. A short food chain from farmer to local abattoir to consumer, helps keep family farms viable, supports small businesses in our rural communities and provides consumers with healthy, nutritious, delicious food produced by people they know and trust.

The loss of small abattoirs is a challenge for the family farms in Perth and Oxford counties and across Ontario raising meat to sell at farmers' markets, to restaurants, to retailers and direct to those consumers committed to eating local meat. Each time a small, local abattoir closes its doors, we all lose access to local meat.

Safe Food:

The National Farmers Union is committed to providing safe food. We recognize that effective regulations and government inspection programs protect family farms, consumers and food processors. The NFU has consistently been critical of government moves to deregulate or cut back on food safety programs and inspections, especially at large plants or at the border. We believe small abattoirs which have an inspector on-hand when each animal is killed can provide safe food for our families, our customers and our communities.

What Can You Do to Help Save Small Abattoirs?

Contact Politicians:

Tell the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, and your local MPP why small, locally-owned and operated, provincially-inspected abattoirs are important to you. Ask them to help save small abattoirs in your community and across the province. Email - minister.omafra@ontario.ca

Honourable Carol Mitchell
Minister Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs
Public Archive Building
77 Grenville St., 11th Floor
Toronto, ON
M5S 1B3

Buy Local Meat:

Buy locally produced and processed meat either direct from farmers' or from butchers or retailers that purchase their meat from local farmers. When you buy meat at a butcher shop, at a supermarket, at a health food store or at a farmers' market ask where the meat came from and who raised the livestock.

Ask for local meat when you go out to eat - many restaurants in Perth and Oxford serve meat from local farmers, ask which menu choices use local meat.

How much are you willing to pay?

Consider whether or not you are willing to pay more for local food, which is often fresher and therefore healthier and more tasty. When you purchase local food you are eating food raised and processed by people you know and trust. The individual attention small, local farms, abattoirs and meat processors give to your food takes time and increases the value of local food.

Spread the Word:

Let others in your circle of friends, family, co-workers and neighbours know about the importance of small, local abattoirs to the local food movement. Ask them to act as well.

Perth/Oxford Local, National Farmers Union

George Stevers, President, R.R. 2 Gadshill, ON N0K 1J0 (519) 393-6855

Ann Slater, Secretary-Treasurer, R.R. 1 Lakeside, ON N0M 2G0, (519) 349-2448, aslater@quadro.net

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