



Ontario Federation of Agriculture

Ontario AgriCentre

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January 9, 2012

Mr. Glenn C. Walker, Chair
Normal Farm Practice Protection Board
Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs
1 Stone Road West, 3rd Floor
Guelph, ON N1G 4Y2

Dear Mr. Walker:

The Ontario Federation of Agriculture (OFA) is working with the Ontario government on regulatory modernization through the Open for Business initiative. Early in this process the agriculture and agri-food industry identified concern across the regulatory spectrum with complaints or investigations that may be frivolous and/or vexatious.

We also recognize that the changing practices and demographics across rural Ontario may give rise to an increasing number of complaints coming before the Normal Farm Practice Protection Board. In this sense it is important for us to clearly understand the processes followed by the Board in addressing complaints.

We understand that numerous complaints come before the Board each year but only a handful actually goes to a Tribunal hearing. To enable the OFA to advise and serve members who may be affected, could you please outline the process undertaken when a complaint against a farm practice is launched? We are particularly interested in any pre-hearing process that resolves or eliminates complaints. Are complaints sometimes deemed to be frivolous, vexatious or without merit?

Furthermore, as the complexity of normal farm practice issues heightens each year, the stakes of losing a Normal Farm Practices Tribunal hearing tend to increase the potential costs of defending against (or launching) complaints. Therefore could you also please outline the circumstances in which costs might be awarded in a Normal Farm Practices Hearing?

Thank you in advance. These clarifications will better enable us to inform members across Ontario.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Mark Wales'.

Mark Wales,
President

cc: OFA Board of Directors