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February 24, 2013

To: The Marin County Board of Supervisors
Via email c/o Kristin Drumm: kdrumm@marincounty.org

Dear Supervisors:

My husband and I operate a sheep dairy in West Marin. As a member of both the Marin ranching community and the East Shore community, I recently became aware of the East Shore Planning Group Steering Committee's correspondence with the County about the Local Coastal Plan, and specifically about ESPG's request that use permits be required for on-ranch sales of ranch products along Highway One.

For agriculture to remain sustainable in West Marin, ranchers need the flexibility to adapt their operations in response to changing times and financial pressures. I was very pleased to hear that the Board of Supervisors is considering adopting language from the Development Code in the Coastal Zone that allows on-ranch sales of products grown or produced on a ranch, from facilities of less than 500 square feet, without a use permit. The costs associated with obtaining a use permit would be prohibitive for many ranchers, given the small scale of their on-ranch sales, and such sales can be an essential route to sustainability for some ranches.

While I do not personally share ESPG's belief that on-ranch sales of agricultural products is likely to impact traffic, I understand their concern that an operation, if large enough, might increase traffic.

Ideally the rules for coastal Marin ranches should be consistent with those for agriculture in the rest of the county, and I believe that the application of the rules in place for the rest of the county, limiting the size of a sales area to 500 sf without need for a use permit, should accomplish that goal. If you feel that additional restrictions are warranted for ranches along Highway One, I would urge you to use some other measure that would distinguish operations of a size that is likely to impact traffic

from those ranches with small-scale on-ranch sales that will not appreciably add to traffic congestion, and, importantly, are those least able to afford the costs involved in obtaining a use permit. Facilities that will be doing enough of a sales volume to significantly impact traffic--on the scale of an oyster farm or restaurant--will be large enough to afford the expense of a use permit. It would be unfair to burden an operation so small that it is unlikely to impact traffic with a use-permit requirement that effectively prevents it from engaging in on-ranch sales.

Sincerely,

Marcia Barinaga