

Minister
of Agriculture and
Agri-Food
and Minister for the
Canadian Wheat Board



Ministre
de l'Agriculture et de
l'Agroalimentaire
et ministre de la
Commission canadienne du blé

Ottawa, Canada K1A 0C5

JUL 08 2008

Quote: 120372

Mr. Jim Wright
President
Garden City Lands Coalition Society
8300 Osgoode Drive
Richmond, British Columbia V7A 4P1

Dear Mr. Wright:

Thank you for your letter regarding the Garden City Lands Coalition's basic petition to restore the ownership of the lands for program needs within the Agricultural Land Reserve. The concerns of the public are important in developing public policy, and I appreciate being made aware of the views of the many signatories of the petition you enclosed.

Prime Minister Harper and the Government of Canada are developing Canada's next generation of agricultural programming, Growing Forward. Under this new policy framework, we will develop programming focused on science and innovation, the environment, and competitiveness for producers and the agri-food sector.

The federal government is supportive of efforts in British Columbia, and elsewhere in Canada, to protect agricultural land for the future. We are following with interest the initiatives of communities, community organizations, universities, and colleges to promote urban agriculture.

While Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada does not currently have a program requirement that could accommodate the Garden City lands, should these lands be available in the future for agricultural uses, the Department would consider that option.

Again, thank you for writing to me on this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Gerry Ritz".

Gerry Ritz, PC, MP

c.c.: Mr. John Cummins, MP

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