



Input on Lower Yakima Valley Nitrate Study

Intranet Daemon Owner to: R10YVNitrate, Caryn Sengupta

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From: Intranet Daemon Owner <idaemon@hazelnut3.epa.gov>
To: R10YVNitrate@EPA, Caryn Sengupta/R10/USEPA/US@EPA

a) Name

[REDACTED]

b) organization

c) Address

[REDACTED]

d) City

Sunnyside

e) State

Wa

f) Zip

98944

g) Phone

h) comments

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment to this report. I am concerned about safe drinking water in our wells because my family, employees and livestock all drink this water.

It appears to me that this study and its conclusions are being driven by a small group of people in this valley that despise dairies. It is important to remember that these people are dedicated to the destruction of the dairy industry in the Yakima Valley. They will continue to manufacture complaints about dairies until every last one is driven from this valley. It is discouraging to me that the EPA wants to be a part of, and assist this effort. The Yakima Valley is the largest producing area of milk in Washington State. The loss of dairies will be a major blow to the economy of Central Washington.

While I do desire clean drinking water, it is important to me that the reasons for elevated nitrates in wells is carefully analysed. I am confident that if this is done it will not be necessary for the EPA to attempt to destroy 4 dedicated and hard working families as it appears you are trying to do. This Valley has a VERY long history of contaminated wells dating back almost one hundred years. While the first settlers brought bovines here with them, the dairy industry did emerge as a major industry until 20+ years ago. The contamination preceeded that growth and for this reason this study does not pass the 'smell' test. I am not a scientist, but I am a practical farmer, and I find this study un reasonable in virtually all its aspects.

When I address a problem I usually employ the KISS method(keep it simple stupid). This seems to give me the best results. In addressing the nitrate issue I would start at the contaminated well in question and FULLY examine this well construction, casing, seal, wellhead and then examine the piping system to the residence, does it have check valves, rpz valves, cracks, general condition. Both of these areas should be examined in relation to any septic systems. As these items check out you carefully begin to move away from the well, watching for any signs of abandoned wells. The Department of Ecology in this state recently sent out a memo that stated they were experiencing issue with abandoned wells and children or small animals were falling into them. Few people know where these abandoned wells are but the DOE suggested that they may be in the thousands.

To focus on the dairies, who operate under Nutrient Management Plans, seems to be grossly unfair. This appears to be a witch hunt, not a reasonable look at an issue with an attempt to reach a viable, doable solution.

The recent formation of GWMA is a strong indication that the people who live in this valley are concerned and want to approach this issue reasonably. I have attended all GWMA advisory committee meetings and viewed this report as an attempt to prevent the GWMA from coming to any agreed upon action. This is dismaying to me and the reason I believe that the small group of dairy haters is working closely with EPA to destroy an industry. That the EPA would allow a group to manipulate them in this manner against other upstanding citizens is highly inappropriate. Please 'stand down' and let the people who live here come up with workable solutions