

Allen- Complaint, Upper Oxford Township, Chester County

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Attachments:AR1 Agricultural District0~1.pdf (298 KB) ; AR1 Agricultural District0~2.pdf (366 KB) ; AR1 Agricultural District0~3.pdf (352 KB) ; Family farm business0001.pdf (389 KB) ; Family farm business0002.pdf (480 KB) ; Family farm business0003.pdf (419 KB) ; sale of farm products.pdf (364 KB) ; Cease desist order.pdf (467 KB)

Mr. Robert Willig,

My husband [REDACTED] and I own a small retail/wholesale business in Oxford Pa, called [REDACTED]. We hand pour all natural soy wax candles and sell handmade all natural skincare products. In addition we are currently involved in a lease to purchase for a small farm (12 acres) at [REDACTED], in Upper Oxford township owned by [REDACTED].

We have been growing a crop of aloe vera plants and harvesting the aloe juice/gel to use in our skincare products soaps, lotions, hand sanitizer, etc. As we continue to expand our Aloe Vera crop and plan for hoop houses in the fall, we are currently expanding with a crop of lavender and possibly hemp next year. Our short term plan is to own and operate a Family Farm and a Family Farm Business in [REDACTED] growing crops, processing crops, and retail/wholesale sales of our completed farm products.

[REDACTED] and I are both farm kids and understand that the world of agriculture is vast with crops, livestock, etc. I honestly believed that agriculture consisted of planting something in the ground and seeing it through to a finished product, no matter what that product may be. It was never our intention to violate any zoning ordinance.

On Tuesday May 19th while we were bottling hand sanitizer Upper Oxford Township codes enforcement [REDACTED] arrived at the farm and ignorantly demanded work be stopped instantly, followed by numerous threats and unnecessary vulgar language. According to [REDACTED] we were manufacturing in agriculture zoning and that was a violation. Although we disagree about the manufacturing, we complied and shut everything down. On May 20th a Cease and desist order dated May 19th was posted on the building, I have included a copy. On May 21, 2020 property owner [REDACTED] reached out to [REDACTED] to find out what we needed to do to proceed. [REDACTED] response was "you can not proceed, the only way you could proceed would be to change the zoning or get a variance and that will never happen there is no manufacturing in Upper Oxford Township do not push this issue"

We feel that the actions of Upper Oxford Township are unnecessary and denying us our right to use our harvested aloe vera crop in our products, in turn earning a living from this farm possibly under the right to farm act.

It is my hope that ACRE will agree that we are considered agriculture by farming a crop of aloe vera and lavender to use in farm products. It is also my hope that ACRE will help to rectify the issues with Upper Oxford Township on our behalf, if you do see fit. If ACRE doesn't agree that we are a normal farming operation, I do ask ACRE to educate and guide us on how to be considered an Agriculture entity. It is my understanding that support from ACRE is our only hope for being able to continue, thank you for taking the time to review my complaint.

I believe I have attached the necessary sections of the zoning ordinance for Upper Oxford Township that apply to a Family Farm, Family Farm Related Business, Sale of farm products in the AR-1 Agricultural District. Please let me know if you need additional sections or if you have any questions [REDACTED]

Kindly

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]