

June 20, 2023

Debbie Day and Dr. Christopher Gingell

To Whom It May Concern,

We are writing this letter in support of Chris Vanhooydonk and his business, Backyard Farm.

We have known Chris for over a decade and followed his career since he was a chef at Burrowing Owl. We have dined at Backyard Farm on many occasions with our wine club who travelled to the Okanagan to enjoy the experience as well as visit the local wineries, shops and restaurants.

Our understanding is that the RDOS approved the initial application which was then sent to the ALC for approval. These two applications were successful and fully supported by the ALC and the RDOS. In addition, the ALC designated Backyard Farm a "special category-agriculinary dining and catering operation" in order for the business to proceed. Now it seems, it is back in the hands of the RDOS for final approval. We don't fully understand the process but it appears to us as rather redundant. Likewise, it is also our understanding that Backyard Farm is referred to as a restaurant which is far from the truth. When one goes to a restaurant, the diner is handed a menu and a wine menu to select their food and beverage. At Backyard Farm, a menu is prepared for the guests well in advance taking into consideration dietary restrictions and allergies. Second, the guests bring in their own beverages to pair with the menu. The room is allocated only for the group of diners for the evening. The diners spend the evening with friends and/or family and there are not any other diners present other than the booking group. This is a catering experience, not a restaurant experience. Third, the produce is locally grown and sustainable as much as possible, as are the proteins.

It behooves us that the RDOS has approved a prison, a race track, and a winery that the owner reportedly built as a competition between two friends to see who could build the finest winery with monies coming from offshore. Backyard Farm's employees are local and the monies earned are spent within the community. Nonetheless, the racetrack, prison and winery bring people to the Okanagan and promote the local economy, as does Backyard Farm.

It would be a travesty to lose a business such as Backyard Farm as it offers a unique experience which one cannot find elsewhere in the South Okanagan. The family works hard to preserve the integrity of their land, through ethical orchard and farm practices to provide their guests with the freshest and most wholesome food possible. The family is committed to the community and the resulting economic growth. Mr. Vanhooydonk has been featured in

multiple media productions including National Geographic. We believe Mr. Vanhooydonk is a fabulous ambassador for not only the region but for agriculture and agricultural tourism as a whole.

We sincerely hope this matter is settled expeditiously and in support of the continuing operation of Backyard Farm.

Sincerely,

Debbie Day and Dr. Christopher Gingell