

# Fauquier County Citizens for Family Farms

For Immediate Release

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## **FAUQUIER FARMERS FIGHT BACK**

*Protest Set for Fauquier Zoning Hearing*

**Warrenton, VA**--At an August 2 hearing before the Fauquier County Board of Zoning Appeals, farmers, their supporters and patrons will appear with symbolic 'pitchforks' to protest the County's recent attacks on family farms and local wineries, and after the hearing FCCFF will hold a press conference to express its grievances.

In the matter before the Board of Zoning Appeals on August 2, Fauquier Zoning Administrator Kimberley Johnson violated Virginia law in citing a Paris, Virginia farm for selling farm products grown and produced at the farm. Virginia law protects the rights of farmers to sell what they grow and agricultural value-added products such as hand-made soap, bees wax candles, jelly/jam, peach pie or even alpaca gloves or yarn.

"Fauquier County has crossed several lines by violating sensitive private property rights and individual liberty. The County is breaking the law, and is trespassing on the rights of farmers, wineries, and their patrons from and visiting the Commonwealth of Virginia. Perhaps even more egregious are the County's Orwellian allegations that a pumpkin carving and a birthday party for eight 10-year-old girls transgressed the County's zoning ordinance, and constitute grounds to cite and fine farmers."

Ms. Johnson further compounded the situation in a self-serving 'CYA' memorandum dated July 18 to the Board in which she blamed those who identified her violations of law as providing "misinformation" to the public. Her memo also misrepresented to the Board of Supervisors the nature of her citation against the Paris farmer, which is an unscrupulous attempt to muddy her legal charges against the farmer and mollify the Board, which must now fire her.

"Given the recent winery ordinance passed by the County forcing vintners to close their doors at 6 p.m., requiring special permits at the discretion of the County to serve food, and giving Zoning Administrator Johnson more authority to snoop into the affairs of wineries and their patrons. County farmers and citizens are rising up to reclaim their liberty, and will stop this lawbreaking and these trespasses by the County by whatever lawful means necessary."

**The FCCFF press conference will immediately follow the hearing before the Fauquier Board of Zoning Appeals, 10 Hotel Street, Warrenton, VA. The letter to the Board of Supervisors may be viewed at FCCFF's website, <http://www.fauquiercountycitizensforfamilyfarms.com>.**

*FCCFF is "the voice of Fauquier County Citizens protecting and preserving the rights of family farms." The rights to engage in agricultural endeavors, family activities, commerce, and peaceful 'pursuits of happiness' are rich in the traditions of Virginia.*

