

From: Delaroche, Ian [mailto:ian.delaroche@ubc.ca]

Sent: Tuesday, December 16, 2014 2:08 PM

To: bairdj@parl.gc.ca

Cc: Gerry.ritz@parl.gc.ca; paul.dewar@parl.gc.ca; Chris Wiebe; jim.watson@ottawa.ca; jbkitts@toh.on.ca; andrea.lyon@agr.gc.ca

Subject: Future of Long-term Experimental Plots at the CEF.

Dear Honorable John Baird PC MP,

I was recently informed that the long-term research plots at the Central Experimental Farm will be disbanded and become part of the future site for the Ottawa Civic hospital. This heritage site has been under continuous cultivation for more than 125 years having served as part of a long-term crop rotation research experiment along with other sites both within Canada and internationally. These long term sites in Canada along with those at Rothamsted Station in the UK and the Morrow plots at the University of Illinois form some of the longest-monitored and continuously-cropped fields in the world. They continue to generate irreplaceable data on soil properties, agronomic practices and environmental impacts as a consequence of continuous crop production. This is critical if we are to ensure Canada continues to produce enough food to feed future generations. Combined with the nearby weather station at the CEF which dates to the late 1800s this represents an invaluable source of scientific data for future generations of researchers, farmers, and ultimately all Canadians.

As a responsible Canadian, I recognize the value that a new state of the art health care facility will bring to the citizens in the National Capital Region. I also applaud the leadership you are demonstrating and the financial support the government of Canada continues to provide for such initiatives through its infrastructure program. Nevertheless, I would ask that your officials please consider looking at another site on the CEF to locate the new hospital. Indeed, it would be a great loss if we were to abandon these historic experimental plots and the economic, social, and environmental benefits which are accruing from this research. I would hope there is a way to re-position the new hospital on land less critical to the continuation of these long-term studies. I am confident that the Central Experimental Farm Advisory Council and AAFC leadership would welcome working with the Ottawa Hospital, the NCC, and yourself on reaching a suitable solution.

Yours sincerely,

Ian de la Roche

Adjunct Professor, UBC
Former Director,
Agriculture Canada,
Plant Research Centre,
Central Experimental Farm

cc. Hon Gerry Ritz, Minister of AAFC

cc. Andrea Lyons, Deputy Minister of AAFC
cc. Dr. Jack Kitts, Chair Ottawa Hospital
cc. Mark Kristmanson, CEO of NCC
cc. Chris Weibe, Chair CEF Advisory Council