

Ottawa, Ontario  
October 27, 2016

HRH The Prince of Wales  
Clarence House  
London, SW1A 1BA  
United Kingdom

Sir,

We were greatly encouraged by the recent news of your support for the initiative to improve the condition of global soils. We, in Ottawa, are blessed by the presence in our city centre of the Central Experimental Farm, which is a National Historic Site. It is one of the longest running agricultural research stations in the world, second only to the Rothamsted Research Station in the UK, with which our scientists have had a longstanding working relationship in soil research. Unfortunately, the Central Experimental Farm is now under threat by relentless development pressures, in particular by having some of its most precious soil research plots given over for the construction of a new city hospital.

While there is no doubt there is a need for a new hospital for our growing city, we are mortified that four of the twelve candidate sites for this new campus are located on Central Experimental Farm lands. This is due principally to its proximity to the location of the current campus of the hospital, literally across the road. Choosing to build a hospital there for this reason however would be extremely shortsighted, as this research station is actively engaged in long term soil research experiments that have a direct bearing on improving the condition of global soils, specifically in the context of climate change.

As there are, in our view, many other suitable sites available in Ottawa for a new hospital, it would be unconscionable to destroy a world class soil research site, which has been in operation since 1886, for this purpose. The final decision, which is expected by the end of November, is in the hands of our federal government. Your Majesty's support to help preserve the national treasure that is the Central Experimental Farm would be of inestimable value.

Yours sincerely,

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cc: His Excellency the Right Honourable David Johnston, Governor General of Canada  
The Right Honourable Justin Trudeau, Prime Minister of Canada  
The Honourable Melanie Joly, Minister of Canadian Heritage  
The Honourable Catherine McKenna, Minister of the Environment and Climate Change  
The Honourable Lawrence MacAulay, Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food