



Mayor Jeff Lehman
Barrie City Council
c/o City Clerk's Office cityclerks@barrie.ca
Barrie, On

May 15, 2014

To the City of Barrie Council Members,

The Barrie Farmers' Market has been the primary venue in Simcoe County to market and promote local farm grown produce, artisan work, food and culinary products while supporting community and culture since 1846.

The Board of the Barrie Farmers' Market is aware of the initiative to allow the sale of VQA wines to take place at farmers markets.

Dr. Lisa Simon and Janice Greco of the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit attended our Board Meeting on May 14, 2014 and made a presentation outlining 'Alcohol as a Health Issue'.

While we appreciate the concerns of the Health Unit, the Board feels that the opportunity of allowing the sale of VQA wines aligns with not only our mandate but also that of the Local Food Act and the Simcoe County Food and Agriculture Charter.

The primary purpose and focus of the Barrie Farmers' Market is to support local farming. Vineyards are, in fact, farms. Farmers grow and cultivate the grapes and other tender fruits that are used in the production of VQA wine.

This opportunity is vital to the economic viability of small wineries. They have been limited to sales at their on-farm outlet. The LCBO has very strict guidelines about the minimum quantity of wine produced by local vineyards in order to secure shelf space. Many smaller vineyards are unable to meet these production criteria.

Providing the opportunity to sell at the Barrie Farmers' Market supports small business within our region, and our local economy.

As you are aware, there are strict rules in place to ensure compliance with wine sales via the Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario. The Health Unit expressed concerns regarding time of sales, location of the booth(s) and product sampling. The Barrie Farmers' Market Board advises the Municipality that the Market is willing to implement strategies to reduce harms by managing sampling, location and hours to address these concerns.

Respectfully submitted,

Lynda Van Casteren

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Chairperson, on behalf of the
Barrie Farmers' Market Board