

Alice Percy

Welcome Governor. My name is Alice Percy and I and my husband Rufus are the owners of Treble Ridge Farm in Whitefield. We are both second generation farmers, and since 2005 we have been running our certified organic diversified farm. We mostly do hogs; we also have grain, hay, fruits, vegetables, we do some sugaring, anything else we can lay our hands on. And we are also the parents of two young boys, and a third on the way.

I am hoping that I will see this administration seriously address the issues of contamination by pesticides and by pollen from genetically modified crops. These issues are especially important to me, both from a professional point of view; as a farmer, pesticide drift and the drift of genome pollen can threaten the organic status of certified farms, which in turn threatens our markets and profitability. Also, as a mother, I think it is extremely important to make sure that toxic chemicals are not drifting from my neighbor's property on to my own children playing in the yard, and I'm sure that mothers across the state feel similarly.

I'm hoping that a copy of this recent report on Maine's organic farms has found its way to your desk and that you will find time to peruse it. It shows that while organic farming is a small industry in Maine, it is certainly not insignificant. We generate about \$36 million in sales, about \$100 million to Maine's economy overall, support over 1500 jobs, and keep tens of thousands of acres of farmland in production. This is a really exciting time to be an organic farmer; there's a lot of connections being made among the organic farms and Maine's institutions, restaurants, retailers, and direct consumers sales.

The public loves what we're doing; I love what we're doing, and I hope the Governor loves what we're doing, and I hope that he and his colleagues will support us with the environmental climate that creates the economic climate that we need to thrive.

Thank you.

Remarks at "Maine People and the Environment" roundtable with Governor LePage
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