

From: Jeff/Sharon Montgomery
Sent: Wednesday, August 01, 2012 4:43 PM
To: Smith, Terry
Subject: Bill Pace Fruit/Blueberry Farm

I am writing to air my disgust over the condition of the blueberry farm on Bellevue Way. It used to be a pleasant time to pick blueberries at this location, but overgrown blackberries and weeds almost make it impossible to get through the rows of the bushes. Some of the weeds are 5' tall and the blackberries intertwine around the blueberry bushes. One almost needs armour to get around. In addition, the bushes are neglected, never trimmed and many are dying or not producing many berries.

Why has our city failed to keep this farm in a decent condition? Many families enjoy picking the fruit each year and one often hears children laughing and having fun with their parents while picking. I would think the city of Bellevue could do much better than this. Let's mow the weeds and take care of the bushes before they die away. And let's make it safe for our residents to pick berries there.

From: Bradley, Geoff
Sent: Friday, August 03, 2012 11:41 AM
To: Jeff/Sharon Montgomery
Subject: RE: Bill Pace Fruit/Blueberry Farm --Citizen Concern

Dear Mr. and Ms. Montgomery,

Thank you for your letter regarding the condition of the Mercer Slough Blueberry Farm. We apologize for the encroaching vegetation that is preventing access to U-pick. We concur with your observations and will work with the crew to address this situation.

In addition to providing a recreational U-pick experience, the Mercer Slough Blueberry Farm is managed as a component of a larger nature park designed to provide multiple public benefits including protection of water quality and wildlife habitat. Blueberry yields can be affected by numerous conditions including the age of the plants, climatic conditions and the presence of disease. The location of the farm in a protected wetland adjacent to Lake Washington creates challenges through environmental limitations on farm management practices (i.e. drainage, pesticide use, etc.) used to help combat disease. This can dramatically decrease yields, especially in difficult years with high rainfall. We are currently working within existing environmental regulations to improve the farm drainage system which should help with future yields.

Thanks again for your observations and feedback and I welcome any additional comments you may have. Please feel free to contact me directly if you have further concerns.

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