



Town of Loxahatchee Groves

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Town of Loxahatchee Groves
155 F Road
Loxahatchee Groves, FL 33470

April 17, 2025

Mr. Keith N. Alexander, RES, MAS, CFE
Palm Beach County Property Appraiser
301 N. Olive Avenue
West Palm Beach, FL 33401

Re: Concerns Regarding Agricultural Classification Determinations

Dear Mr. Alexander,

On behalf of the Town Council of Loxahatchee Groves, I am writing to express our concern regarding the growing number of complaints we have received from agricultural property owners about the removal or denial of agricultural (AG) classifications in our community.

These property owners—many of whom have long histories of agricultural use and stewardship—have reported that AG classifications are being revoked despite compliance with the Best Management Practices (BMPs) established by the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services. In some cases, the justification provided by appraisal staff has been that the activity is not “intense enough,” or that certain animals—including pigs, sheep, or horses—do not qualify for AG purposes. This has included equestrian properties where horses have reportedly been excluded from being considered grazing animals, a stance that conflicts with commonly accepted agricultural standards and the historical character of our region.

The financial impact of these decisions has been significant, with some owners seeing substantial property tax increases-- in some cases, many thousands of dollars in a single year. These costs come without any meaningful change in land use and often require extensive documentation and appeal just to return to a classification that, by most objective measures, should not have been removed.

Loxahatchee Groves is a rural, agricultural community, and we are committed to preserving the viability of farming and equestrian operations for current and future generations. We respectfully ask that your office review the consistency and criteria used in AG classification determinations, particularly where state-recognized BMPs are being followed. We would also welcome the opportunity to engage with your office to better understand the process and to help educate our residents while protecting the value of our agricultural community.

We appreciate the important role your office plays in serving not only our residents but all residents and property owners of Palm Beach County. Thank you in advance for your consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,

Francine L. Ramaglia
Town Manager, Town of Loxahatchee Groves

cc: Town Council