

Commissioner Kathy Bryant, Chairman

Marion County Commissioners

601 SE 25<sup>th</sup> Avenue

Ocala, FL 34471

Dear Commissioner Kathy Bryant:

October 13<sup>th</sup>, 2020

I am writing this letter in support of King Tut Corporation's Small Scale Poultry Processing facility seeking to conduct business in Micanopy, FL.

I know the owners of the above named Corporation from having had our children attend the same school, P.K. Yonge in Gainesville, FL. It is here that I met the family and was introduced in 2016 to the newly opened Zeezenia International Market. Later, while I transitioned to return to teaching, I worked at the market for approximately 7 months as a food service worker/cashier. Their market serves a diverse population and is a rare, independent, family owned food and meat market.

I saw firsthand the community's acceptance and appreciation for Fawzy and Zaineb Ebrahim's serving a need for sourcing weekly groceries and quick bites. The family found ways through the challenges that independent business owners face. They have shown their 4 children how to support the local community with frequent food donations and donating tips in support of the Ronald McDonald House.

Floridians have come to rely on a steady supply of high quality poultry statewide, Alachua and Marion county residents are no different. Adding a local chicken processing facility would impact the county in ways that are predictable and enforceable – regulations you currently have in Marion County that are outlined. These regulations are required by similar processing facilities in the county. New businesses, especially local farms, should be encouraged so long as regulations adherence is demonstrated whereby farmers can provide and uphold a safe, secure food supply to the local area residents.

Allowing Florida Farmers to venture into expanding their operations is necessary as poultry demand is not waning. The Ebrahim family's proposed processing facility and machinery take into consideration maximum level of odor and noise by installing the best rated equipment for such concerns. I have been in communications with the family and at the hearing it will be expressed and outlined by the owner, that the King Tut Corporation will fully comply with the Marion County regulations required of small scale processors as well as be a considerate of all neighboring property/business owners.

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter of support.

Sincerely,

Michelle Meert