



1364 MAPLEWOOD DR.
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February 07, 2021

Dear Members of the Georgetown Township Board:

I am writing in regard to the Township's recent purchase of 1364 Mapelwood Dr. WORMIES currently occupies the greenhouse in the wetland area closest to the paved path surrounding Maplewood Lake. Mr. Dan Carlton, Sup. of Georgetown Township, has informed WORMIES of the June 1st deadline to vacate the property. I am extremely grateful for your generosity and the opportunity to continue operating on the Township's property until June 1st. Due to the financial impact on our growing business, the deadline to vacate falling in the middle of the growing season, and our positive impact in the local community, I would like to request an extension through November, 1st 2021. Upon the approval of this extension request, WORMIES is willing to pay what we have paid in rent previously, \$300 per month, to the Township for the months of February through October 2021. This will allow the company to finalize the search for a new location while continuing to support our partners and customers.

WORMIES is a minority-owned, young, and rapidly expanding local business in a critical phase of growth. WORMIES currently services over 300 households, schools, and businesses as well as employs six individuals. We have been fortunate to maintain a lean operation allowing us to test markets as well as prepare for this impending move. Although 2020 was a record year for both sales and landfill diversion, it also presented some challenges that took energy away from our goal of relocating. I am actively looking with our agent and WORMIES is ready to lease and qualified to borrow. A few more months on the farm will increase the chances of making a successful move without incurring any disruption in inventory during the growing season, which could potentially cost partnerships.

WORMIES is entering the busiest portion of the year, which is late February through October. The vermicompost process can take up to six months to go from food scrap to worm casting. For timing purposes, worm row stages are intentionally staggered in preparation for the seeding, planting, and

fertilizing seasons that lie ahead. Again, any disruption may result in falling short for customers, jeopardizing the long term viability of the business.

WORMIES is a steward of both the community it services and the farm on which it currently resides. Over the past three years, more than 750 cubic yards of organic waste has been diverted from landfills. Instead, the organic matter was fed to worms and the valuable nutrients ultimately returned to the food web. WORMIES work has also been acknowledged and awarded by the US Composting Council, Partners Worldwide, Start Garden, and the Rodale Institute. WORMIES has partnered with many local organizations that share a common mission of education, community involvement, and problem solving. These partners include Frederik Meijer Gardens, Blandford Nature Center, New City Farm, Grand Rapids Public Schools, Golden Hour Farm, Our Kitchen Table, Dwelling Place, Local First of West MI, MSU Extension, and others. This extension would allow WORMIES to continue serving the community as well as strengthening these relationships without the risk of over extending resources.

Lastly, I would like to address the “junk” on the farm. These items are not the property of WORMIES, but I am in contact with Mr. Vandenburg to see how I can coordinate their removal. WORMIES is committed to maintaining a neat and orderly operation and has helped clean several loads of previous tenant’s debris to date.

WORMIES mission is to improve organic waste management and farming practices through the vermicompost process, education, and community building. This mission is well under way, and none of it would be possible without the support of this local community. Mr. Vandenburg’s kindness and generosity allowed WORMIES to begin this journey with nothing but a hatchback and a few five gallon buckets. With the help of Georgetown Township, through the form of an extension, this mission can continue uninterrupted while maintaining profitability.

Any questions or feedback are welcome. Thank you for your consideration and ongoing generosity.

Sincerely,

Luis Chen
Founder and Owner