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Melinda Ramsay photo

Peaches the curious cria, or baby alpaca, sniffs the camera at Lickety Spit Fibre Farm in Binbrook. While the farm is able to dispose of its deadstock sheep and alpacas on the property, co-owner Melinda Ramsay sympathizes with others facing increased costs to outsource the service.

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FARMERS DEADSTOCK DILEMMA

TARA LINDEMANN
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Glanbrook livestock farmers have been looking for workarounds to deal with their animals who die after a major processor, Atwood Resource Inc., temporarily reduced its pickup radius.

"We are fortunate that we can bury animals on our farm but our livestock is small in size," said Lickety Spit Fibre farm owner Melinda Ramsay. "The dairy/cattle folks have the worst of it."

Since 1960, The Ontario Dead Animals Act prevented horses, goats, sheep, swine or cattle that had died from any other cause than slaughter from entering the human food chain. Poultry and other farmed animals were added in 2009. And while there are many options for farmers to safe-

See LOCAL, page 6



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NEWS

AMBULANCE TRANSPORTING PATIENT IN HEAD-ON CRASH IN MOUNT HOPE

FOUR PEOPLE, INCLUDING TWO PARAMEDICS, WERE TAKEN TO HOSPITAL

NICOLE O'REILLY

Four people were taken to hospital on June 28 after a string of collisions in Mount Hope, including one that involved an ambulance transporting a patient.

Hamilton police said the first of two crashes happened shortly before 10:30 a.m. when a man in crisis stepped onto oncoming traffic on Airport Road, between Glancaster and Centre roads.

The 44-year-old was struck by a city-owned hydraulic excavator, said Const. Krista-Lee Ernst. He sustained serious, but non-life-threatening injuries.

Minutes later, as two paramedics took the man to hospital, a black Nissan SUV

collided with their ambulance head-on at the intersection of Airport Road and Upper James Street.

The driver of the Nissan, a man in his 50s, along with both paramedics — a man and a woman — were taken to hospital with minor injuries.

Ernst said the paramedics, despite being hurt from the crash, got out of their ambulance to treat the Nissan driver.

"These first responders are really heroes," she said.

Police are investigating the circumstances of the collision and haven't ruled out possible charges for the Nissan driver. Ernst said the ambulance came to a full stop as it approached the intersection and had its emergency lights and sirens activated.

"The driver of the Nissan was travelling southbound on Upper James and failed to come to a stop and adhere to the emergency sirens," she said.



Cathie Coward/Hamilton Spectator
A black Nissan SUV collided head-on with an ambulance transporting a patient at the intersection of Airport Road and Upper James Street on June 28.

The ambulance could be seen at the scene heavily damaged, its driver's door flung open and bumper mangled. The Nissan, meanwhile, was completely crushed with its grill and hood torn off.

Police closed much of the area surrounding both collisions for hours Tuesday, including northbound Upper James Street at White Church Road East, eastbound Airport Road at Homestead Drive and Upper James at Airport Road.

Anyone with information is asked to call police at 905-546-4925.

LOCAL PLANT CAN'T EXPAND UNTIL 2023

Continued from page 5

ly dispose of deadstock, both on and off the farm, having companies collect the carcasses and take them to a rendering plant has been a key way to deal with the problem.

"The system was win-win," said Ramsay. "They would come and remove the animal(s) which took the work and responsibility away from the farmer, and they could use the animals they picked up for various end-uses. These operations are

still working — they just no longer service us."

Atwood, which processes the carcasses to supply the leather, biodiesel and fertilizer industries, reduced catchment area in Sept. 2021 to deal with increased slaughterhouse material, citing a COVID-related influx of people raising their own meat and using local butchers.

"Some of the small abattoirs had a tough time for a long time, and now people are using them, so we're seeing growth there," said Tom Smith, vice-president for Atwood. "But that hurts the deadstock side. So, as the abattoir volume goes up and I can't grow, I have to reduce the volume somewhere else."

Because the company was tied into a 2011 federal program, the company can't expand operations until April 2023.

To deal with the deadstock processing capacity shortfall, both the federal and provincial governments created a cost-share program to encourage new entrants into the industry. Ontario also issued 11 new licenses for deadstock operators/collectors, which Smith said is problematic.

"It's going to hurt the farmer in the long run, because every permit holder is going to have some operating costs that they're going to cover," he said. "And if they're getting the more licenses they give, the less each one of those collectors get."

STORY BEHIND THE STORY: When issues related to the disposal of deadstock came up in a nearby provincial riding debate, we wanted to know what Glanbrook farmers were experiencing.



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