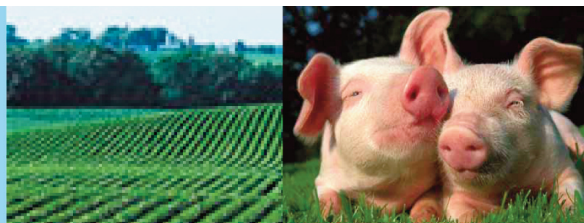


JFAN

JEFFERSON COUNTY FARMERS & NEIGHBORS, INC.



FARMS, NOT FACTORIES!

A Nonprofit Educational Foundation

Volume 9 ~ FALL/WINTER 2011

POLITICS, FARMERS AND CHANGE: THE END OF RURAL AMERICA



BY DAVE MURPHY, DIRECTOR FOOD DEMOCRACY NOW!

[In August] President Obama returned to Iowa, where he launched his successful bid to the White House, to speak about “jobs and economic security” in rural America. According to the White House, his bus tour is not a campaign trip, but veteran political observers would disagree. For farmers and rural advocates, this tour is really about something much larger than electioneering or a new jobs program; it’s about the survival of rural America.

While the plight of urban decay has been widely publicized in the mainstream press, similar issues facing our country cousins (myself included), lack of well

paying jobs, rural brain drain, food deserts, poverty, and lack of access to quality health care, have either been ignored or largely misunderstood by policy makers and the press. Today, more rural Americans are on food stamps and face bleaker economic prospects than their urban counterparts, despite the romantic image of small town life often portrayed by the media.

For the past 50 years, rural America has seen it’s best, brightest, and most mobile flee the countryside in search of jobs as federal farm, economic, and trade policies have slowly bled family farmers off the land. Since 1960, when John F. Kennedy was elected, America has lost

RURAL continued on p.5

EPC MEMBER TARGET OF ETHICS COMPLAINT

Iowa Citizens for Community Improvement (CCI) filed an official conflict of interest complaint in August against Environmental Protection Commission (EPC) member Brent Rastetter, reports an Iowa CCI press release. Rastetter is owner and president of Quality Ag, Inc., a multi-million dollar factory farm construction company.

The complaint brought before the Iowa Ethics Campaign and Disclosure Board demands that Rastetter either resign from the EPC or give up his position at Quality Ag, Inc. and sell his ownership stake in the company.

Quality Ag, Inc., is a business whose “practices are directly affected by the environmental rules and regulations under the EPC’s judgment,” states the complaint.

The complaint also addresses other conflicts of interest, including Rastetter’s “\$30,000 [donation] to Governor Terry

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DIANE WILSON ~ International Environmental Activist

CORPORATE ACCOUNTABILITY: ONE WOMAN’S STRUGGLE AND TRIUMPH

JFAN Annual Meeting Wednesday, October 5 7:30 pm Fairfield Arts & Convention Center

JFAN NEWSLETTER

JEFFERSON COUNTY
FARMERS & NEIGHBORS, INC

Volume 9 ~ FALL/WINTER 2011

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In the News.....

ENVIRONMENTAL GROUPS TO SUE EPA

Three environmental groups served the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) with a notice of intent (NOI) to sue in August. The NOI states that the EPA failed to act on a 2007 petition demanding the EPA revoke the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) authority to regulate factory farm water pollution, according to a press release from Iowa Citizens for Community Improvement (CCI).

Iowa CCI, the Environmental Integrity Project (EIP), and the Iowa Chapter of the Sierra Club initiated the suit.

The 2007 petition demanded the EPA revoke Iowa's authority to issue Clean Water Act operating permits because the state's program doesn't meet federal minimum standards. Iowa has failed to implement critical factory farm regulations, it says, at great cost to water quality. It called for a mandatory response and a public hearing on the matter.

Nearly four years have passed since the petition was brought to the EPA, with no response from the agency to grant or deny the petition, says Iowa CCI. Nor have there been significant improvements in the state's permit program. The EPA's own rules re-

quire it to issue a response to the petition.

In addition, in June, the DNR's Environmental Protection Commission (EPC) voted to indefinitely postpone new rules designed to bring Iowa into compliance with the federal Clean Water Act. This prompted CCI members to file a conflict of interest complaint against EPC commissioner Brent Rastetter who also owns a multi-million dollar factory farm construction company. (See story on page 1.)

Should the EPA revoke the DNR's authority to Clean Water Act permits (known as NPDES permits), oversight of factory farm pollution would revert back to the federal EPA.

"We have a record number of polluted waterways and have had over 700 manure spills with two giant spills that caused massive fish kills in just the last two weeks. EPA needs to act now," said Iowa CCI board member Lori Nelson.

EIP attorney Tarah Heinzen says the EPA's delay is "unreasonable and unlawful, and its continued inaction in the face of Iowa's broken regulatory program is unacceptable. The water quality, and in

EPA continued on p. 4

GOP PROPOSAL DRAWS PROGRESSIVE CRITICISM

Iowa Republican leaders have put forward a nine-point proposal on regulatory reform based on testimony obtained during a series of statewide meetings held this spring, reports the *Des Moines Register*. The initiatives are designed to develop and expand businesses throughout the state. The GOP contends that Iowa regulations interfere with growing the economy.

All rules would be subject to a review every five years, and those not reviewed would be eliminated, according to one of the proposals.

In a press release, Iowa Citizens for Community Improvement (CCI) sharply denounced the report as "seriously flawed" because it ignored the testimony of over 175 CCI members calling for stronger and more effective public oversight over factory farm polluters and wealthy corporations.

This spring, over 1000 Iowans attended "Re-Open Iowa for Business" hearings or-

ganized by Iowa House and Senate Republicans and led by Iowa Senate Minority Leader Paul McKinley. The hearings were designed to find examples of regulations that burdened businesses and cut into job creation. According to a GOP press release, nearly 175 testified and approximately 300 written comments were submitted during the 11-city tour.

Iowa CCI says their members attended every meeting across the state. "We believe that CCI members accounted for at least half of that total and we call on McKinley to immediately release all oral and written testimony to the public."

Representative Dawn Pettengill, R-Mount Auburn, member of the state's Administrative Rules Review Committee, said thousands of rules are on the books, some of which haven't been reviewed in decades. But CCI says that the hearings were a "disingenuous publicity stunt designed to chip away at the traditional role of democratic government institutions.

PROPOSAL continued on p. 4

In the News.....

BRANSTAD ASIAN TRADE MISSION CAN HURT IOWA SAYS IOWA FARMERS UNION

Lt. Governor Kim Reynolds led a trade mission to Asia in June, and Governor Terry Branstad traveled in September to promote Iowa's agricultural exports, including pork, to four Asian countries. Several organizations say the trade missions are a bad move for independent family farmers and the environment, according to an article in *The American Independent*.

State officials are building relationships with China, Korea, Japan, and Taiwan in an effort to increase Iowa's exports by 20% over a five-year period. Iowa currently exports about \$9 billion per year and ranks number one in the US in hog, egg, corn, and soybean production.

At a recent press conference this spring, Lt. Governor Kim Reynolds said that the state is competing with the European Union and Brazil to meet the agricultural demands of a growing, 1.5 billion-person middle class in Asia.

Big agribusiness would be the key benefactors of these trade deals, says Chris Peterson, president of the Iowa Farmers Union, an organization that ad-

vocates for sustainable agriculture. "It would help independent farmers a little, but not enough to make a difference," Peterson said in *The American Independent* article.

Bruce Babcock, an agricultural economist who directs Iowa State University's



Center for Agricultural and Rural Development, said that the US would have to significantly increase production to meet China's demand for pork. Since 99% of the nation's hogs are raised in CAFOs, Babcock says this would mean a growth in the number of confinement operations. He adds the growing demands would also result in higher food prices for US consumers.

UN REPORT: IMMEDIATE SHIFT TO GREEN TECHNOLOGIES CRUCIAL

Declaring that the global environment's capacity to cope with human activity has reached its limits, a UN report is calling for a fundamental technological overhaul of production practices to avert catastrophic impacts of climate change and environmental degradation.

The World Economic and Social Survey 2011: The Great Green Technological Transformation, published by the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs says \$1.9 trillion per year is needed over the next 40 years for investments in clean energy technologies, sustainable farming and forestry techniques, climate-proofing infrastructure, and reducing non-biodegradable waste.

At least half of that is needed in developing countries to meet rapidly increasing food and energy demands, as an additional two billion people are expected by 2050.

The report emphasized time is of the essence due to growing ecological pressures. "Business as usual is not an option," said Rob Vos, the report's lead author.

Green technologies for energy efficiency call for drastic changes in consumption patterns, transportation systems, infrastructure building, and water and sanitation systems.

A "truly green agricultural revolution" is necessary to up food production by 70% to 100% by 2050. Sustainable farming techniques requiring less water and chemicals, upgraded distribution networks, water management systems, and access to land are especially vital to small farmers in developing countries.

Reducing risk of natural disasters will involve affordable technological innovations, targeted to local conditions, to build disaster-resilient infrastructures, and provide coastal protection.

The report stressed the need for international cooperation in the areas of technological development, financial investment and trade. It proposes building a global technology-sharing regime and research networks to spread the efforts rapidly.

"The need for a technological revolution is both a development and existential imperative for civilization," Vos said.

ETHICS *continued from p. 1*

Branstad's re-election campaign, a campaign that was marked by Branstad's pledge to "streamline" ... the factory farm industry."

Rastetter's comments during his confirmation interview with the Iowa Senate during the 2011 legislative session were also cited. The complaint states that Iowa CCI members who monitored the interview reported that Rastetter called, "government regulations 'stupid' and said he preferred voluntary compliance to public oversight and regulation."

On June 21, Rastetter and the EPC board voted to "scrap an important rule-making package to implement the federal Clean Water Act in Iowa after nearly 30

years of noncompliance," says the complaint. The rule-making package would have directly affected Quality Ag, Inc. by requiring it to adhere to more stringent standards for construction and permitting.

The Iowa Ethics and Campaign Disclosure Board meets six times a year and is expected to convene sometime this fall in Des Moines. The meetings are open to the public, and JFAN will send out an email alert when the meeting is scheduled.

The EPC's nine member citizen board oversees the Iowa DNR, providing policy guidance and supervision over the state's air and water quality.

Environmental groups have criticized several of Governor Branstad's EPC appointments, including Rastetter, for their close ties to the factory farming industry.

EPA *continued from p. 2*

turn the public, continue to suffer in Iowa. Iowa agreed to regulate polluters when it took control over the water program, and it hasn't lived up to its end of the deal."

All three groups have expressed a strong desire to avoid legal action against the EPA, but they are also prepared to follow up with a lawsuit if resolution is not reached. They say a sufficient response to the petition would include an Investigation Report and the creation of a plan to either bring Iowa's CAFO program into compliance with the Clean Water Act or initiate formal withdrawal proceedings.

The Iowa DNR received authority to implement and enforce the Clean Water Act in 1978. But the groups say that it failed to keep pace with dramatic changes in Iowa's livestock industry even though the DNR has acknowledged that water quality deterioration is due to the expansion of the confined animal feeding industry.

Federal law allows citizens to petition the EPA to withdraw the power of a state to issue Clean Water Act permits. The 2007 petition meets the EPA's list of relevant criteria that would justify revocation of CWA permits in Iowa, says Iowa CCI.

PROPOSAL *continued from p. 2*

One of the proposals involve conducting an extensive study "commissioned by the Iowa Legislature detailing what the projected financial effects of current and proposed EPA and DNR rules and regulations on Iowa cities over a ten year period."

While Democrats agreed with the GOP's general ideas, they also pointed out that there was no guarantee that public safety would not be compromised.

"One thing that is concerning about the proposal is that nowhere do they mention anything about the concern for the health, safety, and well-being of Iowans, which is why you promulgate rules in the first place, said House Democratic Leader Kevin McCarthy in the *Des Moines Register* article.

"Regulations don't kill jobs, they protect our air and water quality, food and workplace safety, the public health, and our economic infrastructure, said CCI member Gary Klicker.

To read the nine proposals, visit: <http://tinyurl.com/5tposhr>

Additional Source: The Iowa Independent

JEFFERSON COUNTY HOG GROWTH SLOW COMPARED TO OTHER COUNTIES

**BY DIANE ROSENBERG
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

Numbers can tell a pretty good story.

Iowa's hog population increased throughout the state during the last eight years. A total of 20.4 million hogs were raised in 2010 – a 32% increase since 2002.

At 19%, Jefferson County is well under the statewide average.

Many of our neighboring counties have fared far worse. Van Buren County's hog population grew 44%, Washington County 51%, and ironically, Wapello County, with the fewest number of hogs, experienced a whopping 52% increase.

Why did Jefferson County only experience a 19% growth?

JFAN.

Since 2005, JFAN has worked tirelessly to stop the proliferation of CAFOs. Through community education, countywide monitoring, community support, and when needed, financial assistance grants, JFAN has been extremely effective in keeping the number of CAFOs low. Many CAFOs have been stalled, stopped, or relocated because of JFAN's efforts.

Governor Branstad has a goal to increase Iowa's agricultural exports 20% over the next five years according to an article in *The American Independent*. Hogs are a significant part of this increase. JFAN understands from Iowa Citizens for Community Improvement that Cargill is targeting southeast Iowa for further development; they are already pursuing the first of many expansions and new CAFOs in Davis County. (See our stories on pages 3 and 5.)

It's critical our community remains continuously strong and vigilant. It's crucial that JFAN continues a powerful

2002 and 2010 Hog Population in Jefferson and Surrounding Counties

KEOKUK 2002: 159,048 2010: 199,000 25% increase		WASHINGTON 2002: 427,266 2010: 647,000 51% increase	
WAPELLO 2002: 32,142 2010: 49,000 52% increase	JEFFERSON 2002: 57,933 2010: 69,000 19% increase	HENRY 2002: 89,088 2010: 105,000 18% increase	
ALL IOWA 2002: 15,486,431 2010: 20,414,638 32% increase		VAN BUREN 2002: 64,424 2010: 93,000 44% increase	

Note: All livestock statistics, except for Jefferson County 2010 statistics, are based on the 2002 and 2007 USDA Livestock Census. Jefferson County's 2010 statistics are compiled from 2010 Iowa DNR reports and represent a 6% increase over 2008 USDA Livestock Census statistics. To provide a more accurate comparison, the 6% increase was applied across the board to the number of hogs in all other counties.

presence in Jefferson County.

As always, JFAN needs your generous support to remain an effective force – we can't do this without you, our community partner. JFAN is a grassroots organization funded solely by your generous donations.

We can keep the growth of CAFOs to a minimum if we work together. Please give generously to JFAN today, your **"quality of life protection policy."** We encourage you to consider monthly donations, and we are equipped to take secure credit card donations for regular monthly donations. (See page 7.)

Let's continue to protect all we have built and value in our community. Thank you for your generous support.

JFAN'S GOOD NEIGHBOR GUIDELINES

www.jfaniowa.org/GoodNeighbor-Guidelines.host

In the News.....

KEY APPOINTMENT ADDS FACTORY FARM SUPPORTER TO DNR

Governor Terry Branstad appointed former House Majority Leader Chuck Gipp to Deputy Director of the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) in July, second in command under Director Roger Lande, reports an Iowa Citizens for Community Improvement (CCI) press release.

During his tenure as state representative from 1990-2008, Gipp was a strong supporter of industrial agriculture deregulation, supporting an array of pro-Big Ag legislation says Iowa CCI.

In 1995, he voted for HF 519, the bill that removed local control and established a presumption that a factory farm is not a nuisance, making nuisance litigation more difficult. HF 519 opened the door for the explosion of the factory farming industry in Iowa.

Gipp also supported bills in 1997 and 1998 that would grant immunity from fines and penalties to documented polluters and that centralized decision-making authority with the state.

He voted in 2003 in favor of rolling back clean air rules, as well as stripping the DNR of its power to write ambient air quality standards. Gipp also voted that same year to strengthen nuisance lawsuit protections for corporations and expand the industry's ability to build factory farms on environmentally sensitive areas like flood plains and karst topography – an irregular limestone region that can produce sinkholes.

In 2006, he supported legislation that would gut the DNR's authority to deny or modify a factory farm construction permit or manure management plan as well as a bill that would have penalized citizens for repeatedly speaking out against factory farm pollution.

For the past three years, Gipp has managed the Iowa Department of Agriculture's voluntary soil and water monitoring programs in the Soil Conservation Division.

According to inside information, Iowa CCI says that Lande, a lawyer with strong business ties handpicked by Governor Branstad, will resign within a six to twelve month period, and Gipp will step into his place to lead the DNR.

OUR ACTIVITIES AT A GLANCE: JFAN WORKING HARD FOR YOU

BY DIANE ROSENBERG
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Correction to Buch CAFO Expansion

Our last issue of the *JFAN Newsletter* incorrectly described the Buch CAFO as bordering on the city limits of Maharishi Vedic City. The confinement is actually one and three quarters miles from the city's closest border.

One of the fields on which Mr. Buch is applying manure on a bi-yearly basis borders Maharishi Vedic City. However, the city land is pastureland owned by Radiance Dairy and is not adjacent to any residences.

The Buch CAFO is almost two miles away from the Pandit Campus in Maharishi Vedic City and the city's closest residences.

Since the expansion, JFAN has not been aware of any complaints of odor from the manure application. We understand that a cordial relationship exists between Mr. Buch and Maharishi Vedic City representatives, and Mr. Buch has indicated he is willing to work through any issues that might arise.

We apologize for any confusion this may have caused.

CARGILL EXPANDS IN SOUTHEAST IOWA

Cargill is planning to open more factory farms in southeast Iowa in order to provide additional hogs to a new Missouri slaughterhouse according to Iowa Citizens for Community Improvement (CCI). They are first targeting Davis County with plans to expand or build 30 additional CAFOs.

The first expansion would increase a 1850-head operation in Bloomfield to 3710 hogs. Davis County Board of Supervisors has recently recommended permitting the facility to the DNR. Davis County residents are working with Iowa CCI to fight the expansion.

This seriously underscores the importance of remaining vigilant in Jefferson County.

JFAN to Screen Film on Sustainable Production

JFAN is organizing the screening of an award-winning film on sustainable, locally-based farming for November. *American Meat* describes how America arrived at its current industrial system and features several Iowa farmers and agricultural leaders.

New York City filmmaker Graham Meriwether depicts the feedlots and confinement houses, not through hidden camera, but through the eyes of the farmers who live and work there. The story shifts to the rapidly expanding sustainable, local-food movement, examining the debate over whether small-scale sustainable farming can ever produce enough to feed America.

Meriwether and his team spent four years traveling across the country interviewing both sustainable farmers and those who work for Big Ag, taking care to provide a balanced human look at the economic and environmental issues facing farmers today.

The time and location of *American Meat* are to be announced. Stay tuned!

RURAL *continued from p. 1*

over 1.7 million family farms, the backbone of rural economies, with the number of farmers in the U.S. today being outnumbered by prisoners.

Despite increases in farm productivity and improved planting and harvesting equipment, more insidious economic factors like increased industry consolidation, poorly designed subsidy programs, and over-specialization in industrial livestock production, with poor contract protections, have hallowed out the countryside. Instead of prosperity, industrial agriculture has created vast profits for corporations at the top of the food chain, but left a growing number of rural America's Main Streets to resemble ghost towns and its residents poorly prepared or able to meet the nation's important challenges for the 21st century.

While many people in urban areas have never met a farmer or someone who produced the food that appears on their plate each day, despite a growing national awareness of food and agricul-

RURAL *continued on p. 8*

NEWS BRIEFS

FROM IOWA, THE US AND BEYOND

US Bans Additional E. Coli Strains

Six strains of E. coli will be banned from US meat within a year reports *Food Safety News*. Up until now, only one strain, the virulent O157:H7, has been illegal in US meat.

The additional pathogenic Shiga toxin-producing E. coli strains, known as the "Big Six", cause nearly 40,000 illnesses, 1,100 hospitalizations, and 30 deaths each year according to Centers for Disease Control and Prevention statistics. O157:H7 was banned in 1994 when it caught public attention during the notorious Jack in the Box outbreak.

It's thought likely that additional strains will be banned reports the article. But E. coli expert James Marsden from Kansas State University says if additional strains are added to the list, it will propel both the government and industry into a "crisis mode."

The meat industry has been opposing the Big Six ban for several years, reports *Grist.org*.

The Big Six have been implicated in several E. coli outbreaks involving fruits, nuts, dairy products, and leafy vegetables.

Big Ag PR Campaign to Offset Activist Criticism

A \$30 million-per-year public relations campaign by the new US Farmers and Ranchers Alliance (USFRA) is working to make American consumers feel better about their products reports *The Financial Times*. USFRA seeks to counteract the negative image of agriculture from films such as *Food Inc.* and *Farmageddon*, as well as recent food-recalls which have raised public concern.

"Consumers are confused," says USFRA chairman Bob Stallman in *The Financial Times* article. "There is a huge knowledge gap out there, and we want people to know that farmers and ranchers are committed to providing healthy choices." Stallman is also the President of the American Farm Bureau Federation.

USFRAonline.com, the organization's website, lists over 50 affiliates, such as National Pork Board, American Egg Board, and Cattlemen's Beef Board.

Companies such as Monsanto, Dupont Pioneer, BASF and John Deere also appear on their website.

USFRA lists two strategic objectives on its website:

- Increase the number of policymakers and government officials (at all levels) who value modern agriculture production.
- Work with leading national influencer organizations (medical, cultural, dietary, environmental, etc.) to create partnerships in support of today's agriculture

MRSA Found in Factory Farm Cows' Milk

A new strain of Methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA) has been found in the milk of British cows by University of Cambridge researchers reports *The Telegraph (UK)*. The bacterium has sparked new concerns that the growing use of antibiotics in industrial livestock is causing new MRSA strains to emerge.

The discovery occurred during a study



of mastitis in cows and was published in *The Lancet Infectious Diseases* in June.

The strain is found in only a small fraction of all MRSA cases, but scientists say the number is growing. Individuals in England, Scotland, and Denmark carried the new variant.

The bovine-type strain is found to escape detection using standard molecular testing for MRSA.

Tests for MRSA involve identifying the *mecA* gene, which can cause antibiotic resistance. However, the *mecA* gene found in the new strain is only 60% similar to the original version and can lead to a false negative. New MRSA tests must

be upgraded says lead researcher Dr. Mark Holmes.

Dr. Holmes points out that dairy farms are under heavy financial pressure to supply supermarkets with inexpensive milk, which ultimately means the physically stressed herds receive more antibiotics.

Several Recent Manure Spills Kill Thousands of Fish

Four manure spills since June have killed at over 131,000 fish in four Iowa counties, reports the Iowa DNR.

The first occurred in June near Peosta in Dubuque County, killing 104,000 fish valued at \$96,000. Manure from open hog and cattle feedlots flowed into a reception pit that then overflowed from heavy rains. Dead fish were found 18 miles down Whitewater Creek, but most of the fish were thought to have died within the first five miles.

In July, over 100,000 gallons of manure spilled into an Iowa River tributary from a dairy cattle feeding and milking operation near Blainstown in Benton County. The DNR couldn't obtain a dead fish count because of emergency measures to contain the spill, said DNR spokesman Kevin Baskins. But containment measures failed, and the manure reached the Iowa River. Baskins said that by the time the manure reached the river, the ammonia level was sufficiently diluted, and no fish were reported killed there.

In Hamilton County, 27,456 fish were killed in the South Skunk River when manure spilled from a cracked concrete tank at a 4,800 head CAFO. The fish, found more than five miles downstream, were valued at \$38,000.

A fourth spill occurred in Clay County in September when the operator of a 4000-head hog confinement pumped liquid manure from his flooded and overflowing underground pit. The manure was over-applied to a field, and the runoff polluted an unnamed tributary of the Little Sioux River. The number of fish killed was not available at press time.

Two short-term solutions to avoid future spills, says Iowa CCI, are to fully fund the DNR's factory farm enforcement staff and environmental protections division and to implement the federal Clean Water Act. Iowa has been in a state of noncompliance for over 30 years.

Additional Source: Iowa CCI

Researchers at Iowa State Explore Better Hen Housing

Iowa State University (ISU) researchers are exploring ways to improve hen housing at large industrial confinements according to Radiolowa.com. The director of the Egg Industry Center at IUDS, Hongwei Xin, says they are working to improve egg safety and the welfare of the hens.

The US Department of Agriculture is funding the project with a two-year, \$700,000 grant. Xin says they will be looking into many areas including indoor air quality, air emissions, energy use, bird welfare, and economic production.

The researchers will experiment with housing hens together in groups instead of in individual cages. Although there are advantages to this method, Xin says in the Radiolowa.com article that there are also challenges. "The nature of the bird, in large groups... they could establish a pecking order. So, you could have some cannibalism behavior."

The researchers from IUDS are working together on the project with scientists from the University of California-Davis. Recently a ballot initiative was passed in California to ban cage egg operations by 2015. Xin hopes his research will help egg farmers find new, cost-effective housing that doesn't impact consumer cost.

Iowa produces more eggs than any other state.

Chipotle Releases Willie Nelson Video to Promote Sustainability

Chipotle Mexican Grill has paired up with music icon and family farm advocate Willie Nelson to create an appealing animated short film, "Back to the Start," reports Chipotle. The video, released in September, depicts a farmer's career from running a family farm to evolving into a CAFO, then



switching back to a sustainable farm.

Chipotle is showing the video on nearly 5,700 movie theater screens in advance of feature films to educate consumers about its favored farming methods and to demonstrate the differences between industrial and sustainable farming.

The film features Nelson singing a cover of the Coldplay song, "The Scientist." The song can be purchased on iTunes, and \$.60 of every \$0.99 download benefits the Chipotle Cultivate Foundation, which provides funding to support sustainable agriculture, family farming, and culinary education.

The two minute video can be viewed at Chipotle.com/backtothestart.

New Technology Extracts Ammonia from Liquid Manure

Researchers at Texas A&M University have developed a method to capture ammonia from liquid animal manure and turn it into a valuable fertilizer commodity reports a Texas A&M press release.

The technology could reduce excessive emissions of ammonia from concentrated animal feeding operations, which are considered a source of odor and environmental pollution, dead zones (algae blooms) in bodies of water, and contamination of ground water. Ammonia may also be present in nitrous oxide, a potent greenhouse gas, says Dr. Saqib Mukhtar, developer of the gas-permeable membrane technology.

Dr. Mukhtar, associate head of the department of biological and agricultural engineering, says his method is relatively simple compared to other methods, which lessen or "scrub" ammonia at manure storage plants. The gas-permeable tubing has also been used to make synthetic blood vessels.

"We are capturing ammonia with this process," he said. "We might be able to return part or all of the cost of the process as ammonium sulfate, an expensive fertilizer." His team is working on scaling up the model to the industrial level.

Additional Source: Discovery.com

MAIL IN DONATION FORM

Please cut out this form and mail it with your tax-deductible donation to:

JFAN, Inc., P.O. Box 811, Fairfield, IA 52556

Donation Amount: ☐ \$25.00
☐ Other \$ _____

Name _____

Street _____

City/State/Zip _____

Phone _____ **Email** _____

Credit Card Number _____

Exp. Date: _____

☐ Visa ☐ Mastercard ☐ Discover

**Make checks payable to: Jefferson
County Farmers & Neighbors, Inc.**
Thank you!

Donate Online

To make a credit card donation using PayPal, go to www.jfaniowa.org
 Click on "What you can do" then click on "Make a Donation"
 and follow the simple instructions.

MAKE A DONATION!

Please support JFAN with your generous tax-deductible donation. JFAN has been approved by the IRS as a 501(c)(3) tax exempt educational foundation. All donations to JFAN are tax-deductible to the full extent of the law. Please consult with your personal tax advisor about any questions you may have about your donation. JFAN will send out receipts only for donations over \$250.

RURAL *continued from p. 5*

ture issues, most Main Street businesses in rural America realize that their livelihood and very survival are tied to the economic wellbeing of the local farm economy.

And if you want to save rural America, you have to save the family farmer.

Obama's Rural Agenda, circa 2007

Since the president's Rural Tour is about creating jobs and economic opportunity for rural America, it might help to start out with a refresher of what President Obama promised the first time he toured the state, which helped him on his road to unexpected victory during the Iowa caucus.

When Obama first ran for president in Iowa, he cultivated a serious grassroots reform platform in agriculture that included:

- Caps on subsidy payments
- Regulating CAFOs (factory farms)
- Encouraging local and organic agriculture and
- "Preventing anticompetitive behavior against family farms."

That last one was important. I remember receiving an advanced copy of Obama's Rural Agenda before it was released in October 2007 and reading those words and thinking we finally have a candidate who understands rural issues and is willing to do something about it.

In the past 30 years, since Ronald Reagan took office, the U.S. government has stopped enforcing antitrust laws, while recklessly encouraging an orgy of corporate mergers. During this time, food and agriculture production has become one of the most concentrated sectors in the U.S. economy. General economic theory states that when 4 or less companies control more than 40% of market share, that industry is no longer competitive, competitiveness being the lifeblood of capitalism, innovation, and democracies.

Today just 4 companies control 84% of the beef packing industry, 66% of the pork packing industry and just one company, Monsanto, controls genetically engineered seeds for corn, cotton, soybeans and canola on more than 90% of the acres that are planted with GMO seeds. Such excessive market concentration has given corporations an increased stranglehold on supply, shrinking both profits and markets for family farmers. Since 1952, farmers have seen their share of the food

dollar that they receive shrink from 47¢ on every dollar spent on food to barely 20¢.

Antitrust Investigation to Nowhere?

To his credit, President Obama and his staff listened to the plight of family farmers when he caucused in Iowa. As a result, last year the Obama administration launched a series of workshops to investigate anti-competitive practices in food and agriculture. These workshops were potentially so historic that I felt compelled to travel across the country to all 5 of them in hopes of witnessing the dawn of a new era in agriculture when our government would finally stand up for family farmers instead of promoting agribusiness profits.

Regretfully, the Department of Justice (DOJ) has so far refused to issue a report or take any meaningful actions against the largest violators.

Even worse for farmers was the news last month that DOJ antitrust chief Christine Varney was leaving the administration without finishing the job to join a white glove law firm in New York. For many farmers who have endured the corrupt practices of agribusiness for decades, Varney was seen as the last best hope of freeing farmers from an unfair system that has driven hundreds of thousands livestock farmers out of business and shackled them with abusive contracts.

In December of last year, I traveled to Washington DC to deliver more than 200,000 comments from farmers, citizens and Food Democracy Now! members in a private meeting with Christine Varney and other DOJ and USDA staff to explain the urgent need for antitrust enforcement. As always, Varney was committed in her personal statements, but did let it slip that others who were part of the investigations were potentially opposition. With Varney leaving, family farmers and rural America may never get the justice they deserve.

Hope for Rural America?

Even now an important decision waits on the president's desk that will have more to do with creating jobs and economic security for rural America than any bus tour or another White House briefing paper on jobs.

During the 2008 Farm Bill, Congress required the USDA to write rules that addressed problems of market manipulation and unfair contracts to protect livestock

farmers. Known as GIPSA, for the USDA agency that oversees their enforcement, Grain Inspectors, and Packers and Stockyard Administration (GIPSA), the new rules would create a fair marketplace for farmers to sell their livestock without fear of retaliation, require packers to maintain written records over price deviations, and prevent undue preferences.

More than anything, the completion of the DOJ/USDA antitrust investigations, with significant enforcement actions, and the finalizing of strong GIPSA rules will determine the fate of the family farmer and rural America for the century to come.

If President Obama truly wants to create jobs and economic security for rural economies and see farmers thrive, he'll follow through on the promises he already made to Iowans and make sure that farmers have the access to fair markets that they deserve.

In reality, the best way to create jobs is by saving the ones that you already have. The same is true about keeping farmers on the land. The equation for success in rural America has never changed, make sure farmers receive a fair price in the marketplace and the wealth will spread, our communities will prosper, and our nation will flourish. After a century of listening to false promises by DC politicians, rural America is paying closer attention to what these folks do once they're elected, versus what they say on the campaign trail. And it's time that Washington got down to the business of putting farmers first, after all their jobs just might depend on it.

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