

# JFAN

JEFFERSON COUNTY FARMERS & NEIGHBORS, INC.



**FARMS, NOT FACTORIES!**

*A Nonprofit Educational Foundation*

Volume 13 ~ FALL/WINTER 2013

## Big Ag's PR Campaign to Shape Public Thinking on Factory Farms



The corporate livestock industry presents a picture of CAFOs as clean, modern facilities more comfortable for hogs than living outdoors.

by **Dr. John Ikerd**  
**Professor Emeritus**  
**University of Missouri at Columbia**

Finally, the promoters of concentrated animal feeding operations, or CAFOs, are on the defensive – after many years of persistent opposition. The general public is beginning to awaken to the problems and perils of CAFOs. The war against CAFOs may be far from won, but the tide of the battle seems to be turning. As might be expected at this point, the defenders of CAFOs have mounted major counteroffensives all across the country. For example, the US Farmers and Ranchers Alliance (USFRA) is a new national pub-

lic relations initiative defending so-called modern, industrial agriculture. It is supported by a multi-million dollar annual budget provided by major agricultural commodity organizations and agribusiness corporations. Bob Stallman who is president of the American Farm Bureau Federation, a major promoter of CAFOs, also serves as chairman of USFRA.

The primary objective of the organization is to defend modern industrial agriculture against a growing wave of public concerns, as the public relations firm in charge of USFRA propaganda readily admits. Several states have formed "Farmers Care" organizations with similar missions and are

*PR continued on p. 14*

## CAFO West of Maharishi Vedic City Going Forward

A Fairfield resident is moving ahead with a 1200-head hog confinement southwest of Maharishi Vedic City. Jordan Morris plans to develop the confinement on Fruitwood Boulevard less than two miles from the Maharishi Vedic City border. He has told a neighbor that he has future plans to expand to at least 2400 hogs.

The CAFO would also be located less than one mile from a high-end health resort currently under development and less than a mile from land being cultivated for an organic farm.

JFAN is working extensively with neighbors and facilitated discussions between Morris and the neighbors. An initial, cordial meeting took place with

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# JFAN NEWSLETTER

JEFFERSON COUNTY  
FARMERS & NEIGHBORS, INC

Volume 13 ~ FALL/WINTER 2013

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## In the News.....

# EPA and DNR Reach Agreement on Clean Water Act Work Plan

A little over a year after the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) issued its critical report on Iowa's enforcement of the federal Clean Water Act program, the EPA and the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) signed off on a Clean Water Act (CWA) work plan. The DNR developed the work plan in response to the EPA report.

In 2010, three environmental organizations, Iowa Citizens for Community Improvement, Iowa Sierra Club, and Environmental Integrity Project, (EIP) threatened to sue the EPA for not adequately enforcing Iowa's administration of the Clean Water Act. That threat spurred the EPA's investigation last year.

The work plan requires the following to take place over the next five years:

- On-site inspections for all large factory farms that don't have CWA permits. Large factory farms are defined as 1000 animal units. For hogs, that equates to 2500 hogs weighing 55 pounds or more or 10,000 hogs weighing 55 pounds or less
- On-site inspections for medium size (500 animal units) factory farms if they have had a sizeable spill in the last five years or store manure in an open pit less than ¼ mile from a U.S. water source
- Desk surveys for all other medium size factory farms to determine if site-specific factors may indicate the likelihood that a discharge could take place
- Increased separation distances for cattle feedlots
- Tougher enforcement, including more violations subject to fines and penalties. This includes determining penalties that ensure violators don't benefit financially from non-compliance.

An original petition filed in 2007 by the three environmental organizations called for the EPA to strip Iowa's authority to administer the Clean Water Act for failing to enforce factory farm polluters. The petition will remain on file during the five-year period.

Some details of the plan, such as the definition of a "sizeable spill" and "inspection" are still to be worked out.

Prior to the plan's formal adoption, CCI, Iowa Sierra Club, and EIP mounted a

campaign to put pressure on the two organizations to finalize the work plan. CCI reported that Governor Branstad and DNR Director Chuck Gipp were stalling on signing it.



CCI also learned that closed door discussions were taking place between Governor Branstad's Chief of Staff, Region 7 EPA Administrator Karl Brooks and Water Quality Specialist Karen Flourney, DNR Director Chuck Gipp and Deputy Director Bruce Trautmann, and representatives of Iowa Farm Bureau, Iowa Pork Producers Association, Iowa Cattlemen's Association, Iowa Poultry Association, and the Iowa Turkey Federation.

EPA Director Gina McCarthy traveled to Iowa to meet with the state and industry groups and initially refused to meet with CCI and the other environmental organizations said CCI, but pressure from the coalition prompted a meeting with them as well.

CCI says Governor Branstad and the industry groups were pushing for a weaker plan that would have guaranteed inspections for only 500 of the largest factory farms – those with 2000 beef cattle or 5000 hogs.

Amidst concerns that the group would succeed, CCI sent a letter to Karl Brooks and Chuck Gipp demanding the "EPA and DNR deliver a strong work plan without further delay." Twenty environmental organizations – including JFAN – signed the letter.

"When the dust settled, the final deal was much stronger than what the corporate ag industry wanted and pushed for," says David Goodner, Farming and Environment Organizer for CCI.



## In the News.....

"There's no question the big coalition sign-on letter that your organization joined was one of the moving pieces of the larger overall effort that helped us leverage the best deal we could at a critical juncture," he said.

"This deal would have been stronger and more effective without the political interference of Governor Branstad and the Iowa Farm Bureau," says CCI member Larry Ginter in a CCI press release, "But at the end of the day, this is a good step forward that lays the groundwork to win even more changes in the future."

At least 3,200 facilities will be inspected with the new work plan. These inspections will determine if the facilities discharge manure into waterways. Those that do will be required to obtain Clean Water Act permits. At present, CWA permits are only required for facilities that have already discharged.

"The fight is far from over," says Ginter. We will rigorously monitor the implementation of this agreement and continue to press our demands through rulemaking as well as during the 2013 legislative session."

*Additional Sources: Des Moines Register, National Hog Farmer*

### CAFO *continued from p. 1*

Morris, Tri-Oaks public relations representative Nick Biggs, several neighbors, and JFAN members. Follow up meetings have taken place between the neighbors and Morris.

Despite Morris' willingness to initially reach an agreement with neighbors in friendly follow-up discussions, he decided to move ahead with construction. The 21-year old former Iowa State University student told one of the neighbors that two industry groups, the Iowa Pork Producers Association and the Coalition to Support Iowa Farmers, are supporting him, but it is not clear in what way.

JFAN is providing informational guidance for neighbors in their efforts to organize a community group. In addition, neighbors have recently contacted attorney David Sykes of the Speer/Middleton/Sykes Iowa legal team to discuss how to proceed legally.

### JFAN'S GOOD NEIGHBOR GUIDELINES

[www.jfaniowa.org](http://www.jfaniowa.org)

## EPA Rule Withdrawal Spurs Lawsuit

A coalition of community, animal welfare and environmental organizations filed a lawsuit against the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) challenging the Agency's quiet withdrawal of a proposed rule that would have allowed EPA to collect basic information, like locations and animal population sizes, from factory farms according to a Humane Society press release.

The Center for Food Safety, Environmental Integrity Project, Food & Water Watch, The Humane Society of the United States, and Iowa Citizens for Community Improvement filed the suit in the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia arguing that the Agency's withdrawal of the proposed rule lacks the rational basis required by law. The information at issue is critical to the EPA's ability to protect waterways from pollutants produced by factory farms, one of the country's largest sources of water pollution.

Hugh Espey, Executive Director at Iowa

*RULE continued on p. 5*



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## FIGHTING FACTORY FARMS (CAFOs)



Iowa attorney David E. Sykes has provided legal services for individuals and communities fighting CAFOs in Iowa for over five years. Mr. Sykes is now joined by nationally recognized environmental attorneys Charlie Speer from Kansas City, Missouri and Richard H. Middleton, Jr. from Savannah, Georgia. Mr. Speer and Mr. Middleton have won numerous multi-million dollar legal settlements and court awards nationwide on behalf of their clients. This experienced legal team is now representing Iowa communities fighting CAFOs. They provide legal services on a contingency fee basis where they are only compensated if they win money damages for their clients. This fee structure helps level the playing field when communities are financially struggling against CAFO operators and their well-financed industrialized agricultural suppliers.

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## In the News.....

# Australian Campaign Spurs Changes in National Marketplace

A campaign that tugs on the consumer's heartstrings spurred two of Australia's largest supermarkets to eliminate pork and eggs from battery cages and gestation crates ahead of schedule, reports *The Huffington Post*.

Last October, Animals Australia, an animal welfare advocacy group, unrolled "Make It Possible", a major campaign designed to generate public opposition over the cruel living conditions for caged hogs and chickens. At the center of the campaign is a two minute televised video, "When Pigs Fly" depicting an appealing piglet singing "There's a Place for Us" from *West Side Story* while walking through a packed confinement. The video concludes with the piglet flying away to freedom.

An 11-minute version of the piece features many Australian celebrities speaking out against the cruelty of factory farming and encouraging people to spend their retail dollars on sustainably raised meats.

Shortly after the release of the video on Australian's TV stations, Coles, the country's largest supermarket chain, announced that on January 1, 2013 they

would stop selling the company's branded pork and egg products from animals raised in cages one year ahead of schedule. Woolworth's, the country's second largest supermarket chain followed suit, announcing that all their house-brand pork would come from cage-free hogs beginning in mid 2013. Woolworth's already has



been selling cage-free house brand eggs.

A spokesperson for Australian Pork, Emily Macintosh, says that the industry has been working since 2010 to phase out gestation crates by 2017 at a \$50 million price tag. One third of Australia's sows are already living in crate-free environments.

The country's pork and egg industries criticized the campaign, claiming it was misguided and that factory farming is not cruel. "Hens in cages are likely to live longer, be more healthy and are safer from weather and predators," said James

Kellaway, managing director of the Australian Egg Corporation Limited in a statement. "Families shouldn't be manipulated by activists such as Animals Australia and retailers such as Coles."

To fundraise for the campaign, Animals Australia created 15,000 "Make It Happen" shopping bags to sell in Coles stores. The National Farmers' Federation, Australia's equivalent to Farm Bureau, came out strongly against the campaign, and angry farmers threatened to withhold the sale of meat and fresh produce from the supermarket chain.

Animals Australia asked Coles to remove the shopping bags in order to end the targeted actions against the supermarket.

"It is a dark day for animal welfare in this country when a retailer's support for an animal welfare initiative is vehemently opposed by the farming lobby," said Animals Australia Campaign Director Lyn White.

However, public outrage ignited such a flurry of donations for the advocacy group that Animals Australia's website nearly crashed. Enough funds were raised to broadcast "Let Pigs Fly" on one of Australia's prime time cooking shows in June.

"[T]he farming lobby fought hard to shut down an initiative aiming to raise awareness about factory farming. But their bully tactics backfired and instead resulted in nation-wide media — with more people now talking about factory farming than we could ever have hoped for," reports their website.

Watch the video:

[www.makeitpossible.com](http://www.makeitpossible.com).

*Additional Sources: The Sydney Morning Herald, Sustainable Business.com; [www.AnimalsAustralia.org](http://www.AnimalsAustralia.org)*

Great Work, JFAN!  
Thank you.

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## In the News.....

### RULE *continued from p. 3*

Citizens for Community Improvement said: "While power plants, waste treatment facilities and manufacturers have had to comply with the protective standards of the Clean Water Act, the factory farming industry has managed to evade any meaningful regulation. After over three decades, there is no rational reason for why EPA won't enact the types of Clean Water Act approaches with factory farms that have worked well with all of our other polluting industries."

The information in question includes the CAFO sizes, precise locations, ownership, waste management procedures, specific number and types of animals held, history of illegal discharges and whether they have a Clean Water Act discharge permit. In many cases, this information is already collected on the state level reports Care2.com.

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## Australia Territory to Ban Livestock Cages

The legislative assembly in the Australian Capital Territory (ACT) is poised to pass a ban on chicken battery cages for hens, gestation crates, and chicken de-beaking, reports *ABC News Australia*. The legislation is expected to pass in the Assembly in October.

First introduced in 1997, the bill has gone through five attempts at passage. "I'm very pleased that this one will finally pass through..." said Greens Party Minister Shane Rattenbury in the *ABC News Australia* article.

ACT, a territory in southeast Australia, is the smallest self-governing internal territory in Australia and home of Canberra, the nation's capital. There are currently no commercial hog or poultry factory farms, but Rattenbury says the legislation is still needed. "If you have clear standards, no one will attempt to come here and set one up," said Rattenbury in a FoodMagazine.com article.

Australia's pork and egg councils have criticized the move, claiming egg prices will escalate and that the legislation undermines the move away from gestation crates already taking place. But the ACT's Chief Minister Kathy Gallagher rejected the criticism. "...[T]his is good legislation to pass and not allow [these practices] to happen in the future," she said in the *ABC Australia* article.

"The ACT Government is standing up for animals, with three of the cruelest factory farming practices ever inflicted on animals set to be outlawed," said Animals Australia, an animal welfare group, on their website.



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## In the News.....SPECIAL FOCUS ON ANTIBIOTIC RESISTANCE Part 2

# CDC Report: Antibiotic Resistance Serious Health Threat

## Factory Farming Undermining Drug Effectiveness

A new report from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) urgently calls for the reduction of antibiotic use writes the *San Francisco Chronicle*. The report, *Antibiotic Resistance Threats in the United States, 2013* confirms a link between the routine use of antibiotics in livestock and the growing problem of antibiotic resistance.

Over 2 million people become infected with antibiotic resistant bacteria each year, and at least 23,000 die from the infections, the report finds. In addition, a quarter of a million people become infected with *Clostridium difficile* (*C. difficile*), a unique bacterial infection related to antibiotic use and resistance that kills 14,000 people annually. These are "minimal estimates" says CDC Director Thomas Frieden.

The routine use of low-dose antibiotics in livestock to speed animal growth or prevent illness accounts for 70-80% of all antibiotics used. The low dosage creates an ideal environment for bacteria to form resistance to the drugs.

"Widespread use of antibiotics in agriculture has resulted in increased resistance in infections in humans," Frieden said in the *San Francisco Chronicle* article.

The Animal Health Institute, a lobby group for pharmaceutical companies says only two of the 18 antibiotic threats covered in the report are connected to antibiotic usage in livestock. But San Francisco Medical Society's public health director Steve Heilig says the CDC report "clearly implicates agriculture's contribution to the problem" and questions whether leaders in agriculture and government "will finally listen to their own expert agency on this," reports the *Chronicle*.

The report also finds that half of all the antibiotics prescribed by doctors are unnecessary.

The CDC report issues an alarm that antibiotics will become ineffective unless their use is dramatically reduced and that routine bacterial infections, such as urinary tract or respiratory infections, may become deadly. In addition, the ineffectiveness of antibiotics would undermine the advances of modern medicine. The danger of infections would

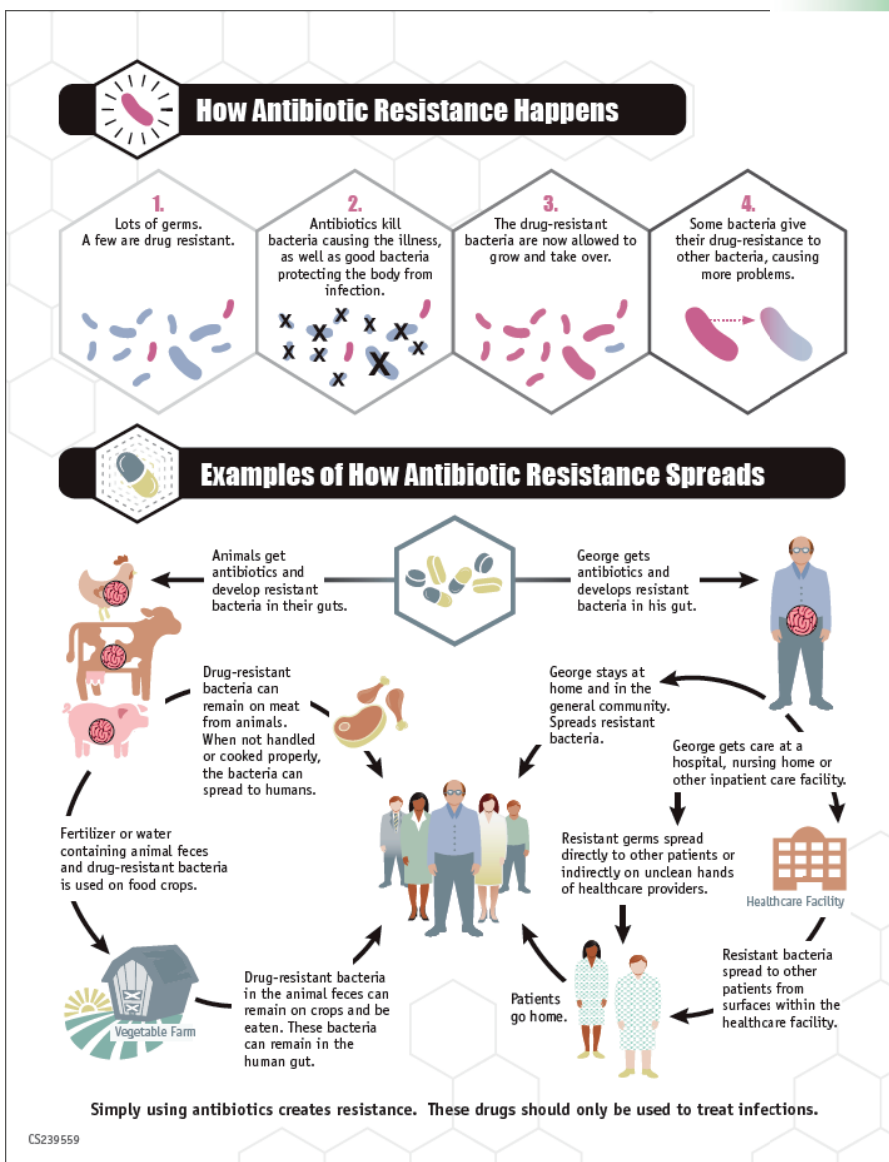


Illustration: CDC Infographic

render such procedures as organ transplants, joint replacements, cancer therapies, and invasive procedures unusable.

Antibiotic resistance is already playing a critical role in 23,000 deaths from bacterial infections each year.

There are knowledge gaps in how to handle the growing antibiotic resistance crisis, says the CDC. The national, state, and federal capacity to respond to urgent and emerging antibiotic threats is limited, and there is no international surveillance of antibiotic resistance at present. In addition, data is not systematically collected on antibiotic use in human healthcare and in

agriculture. The report also found flaws with the lack of programs to improve how doctors prescribe antibiotics around the country.

Although the link between the use of antibiotics in farm animals and bacterial resistance was suspected as far back as the 1960's, the Food and Drug Administration's attempts to reduce their usage have been blocked by the pharmaceutical and livestock industries' influence on Congress, reports the *Chronicle*.

The FDA asked the pharmaceutical companies to voluntarily desist from using antibiotics as a growth promoter,

**CDC** continued on p. 11

## In the News.....SPECIAL FOCUS ON ANTIBIOTIC RESISTANCE Part 2

### Hospital-Related MRSA Infections Declines

The number of methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA) infections from hospital exposure dropped by over 50% between 2005-2011 according to a new study published online on September 16 in *JAMA Internal Medicine*. However, community-associated infections have remained constant reports *Medscape*.

Researchers, headed by Raymund Dantes, MD, MPH of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), traced cases in nine US metropolitan areas using CDC data. They broke the infections down into three categories:

- Hospital-onset infections, cultured three days after hospital admission
- Healthcare-associated community-onset (HACO), cultured less than three days after hospital admission or within one year of several hospital procedures
- Community-associated (CA) infections, when no hospital-related criteria fit.

The number of MRSA cases documented in 2005 fell from 111,261 to 80,461 in 2011. HACO cases make up the largest share of MRSA infections, yet the incidence of HACO cases fell by 27.7% in those years. Hospital-onset infections fell even more by 57.2%. Community-associated infections declined by only 5%.

In 2011, the incidence of community-associated infections (16,560) surpassed the number of HACO cases (14,156).

The authors attribute improved prevention procedures within the medical setting to the decline in health-related MRSA.

Community-associated MRSA are infections that occur without any known healthcare association.

### More Children Getting Community-Associated MRSA

Young infants and African-American children are experiencing a higher incidence of methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA) infections according to a new study published online in the September 23 issue of *Pediatrics*. This study sharply contrasts with the one that found significant declines in HACO associated MRSA in adults.



Lead researcher Martha Iwamoto, MPD, MPH of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, examined data of 4.4 million children younger than 18 years old from nine geographic regions.

Iwamoto found that children experienced a 10% increase in community-associated MRSA from 2005 to 2010. Further examination found that children, ages 3 to 90 days, experienced a higher incidence with 43.9 cases per 100,000 as compared to 2.0 cases per 100,000 older infants and children.

African-American children experienced a higher incidence of community-associated MRSA than children of other races, as well. In 2010, 6.7 African-American children per 100,000 experienced MRSA as compared with 1.6 cases of all other children. There were no significant trends

for HACO or hospital-onset MRSA cases.

Thirty nine percent of the cases in children occurred in infants less than a year. Ninety-one percent of all children with MRSA needed hospitalization.

"People think MRSA is a problem with dirty hospitals, but not anymore. And it hasn't been for a decade and a half now. ...But now we have to understand that we need a targeted program to help people in households reduce the spread."

Occurrences of community-associated MRSA do not have a direct connection with healthcare treatment.

### Study: Some MRSA Originated in Cattle

Researchers in Scotland have discovered that at least two strains of methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA) originated in cattle about 40 years ago, reports *Health Canal*. The study, funded by England's Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council and published in *mBio*, traced the genetic makeup of more than 40 strains of *Staphylococcus aureus* and found at least two genetic subtypes that jumped to humans.

The researchers, based at The Roslin Institute at the University of Edinburgh, said the bacterium jumped to people through direct contact. Once in a human host, *Staphylococcus aureus* became resistant to methicillin, evolved into MRSA, and developed a resistance to attack by the human immune system.

"This is the first clear genetic evidence of subtypes of *Staphylococcus aureus* which jumped from cattle and developed the capacity to transmit widely among human populations," said lead researcher Professor Ross Fitzgerald of the Roslin Institute.

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## In the News.....SPECIAL FOCUS ON ANTIBIOTIC RESISTANCE Part 2

# Exposure to Pig Farms and Manure Fertilizers Associated with MRSA Infections

Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health Press Release

Researchers from the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health have, for the first time, found an association between living in proximity to high-density livestock production and community-acquired infections with methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus*, commonly known as MRSA.

Their analysis concluded that approximately 11 percent of community-acquired MRSA and soft tissue infections in the study population could be attributed to crop fields fertilized with swine manure. The study is the first to examine the association between high-density livestock operations and manure-applied crop fields and MRSA infections in the community. The results were published online September 16 in *JAMA Internal Medicine*.

According to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, nearly 80 percent of antibiotics in the United States are sold for

use in livestock feeds. The manure produced by these livestock and applied to crop fields contains antibiotic-resistant bacteria, resistance genes, and about 75 percent of the antibiotics consumed by the animals.

For the study, researchers identified patients with MRSA infections and skin and soft tissue infections reported in electronic medical records provided by Geisinger Health System. The two case groups were compared to patients who never had a MRSA infection. Patients received an exposure score based on their distance from the production, the number of animals at livestock operations, the amount of manure spread on crop fields, and the size of the field. The researchers noted that between 2005 and 2010 there were about 3,000 patients with MRSA and 50,000 with skin and soft tissue infections who were diagnosed and treated in the Geisinger Health System.

The cases came from more than

446,000 Pennsylvania residents between 2005 and 2010. The study identified 1,539 cases of community-associated MRSA and 1,335 cases of health-care-associated MRSA. The researchers found a significant association between community-associated MRSA and application of swine manure to crop fields. A similar but weaker association was found between swine operations and community-associated MRSA. No association was found between dairy farms and MRSA infections.

"This is the first study that has linked MRSA infection and skin and soft tissue infections in the community to high-density livestock production. The results require replication, but we believe we have provided additional strong evidence that these livestock practices have important public health consequences," said Joan A. Casey, MA, lead author of the study and doctoral candidate with Bloomberg School's Department of Environmental Health Sciences.



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# Our Activities At a Glance

## JFAN Working Hard for You

by **Diane Rosenberg**  
Executive Director

### JFAN Creates Online Manure Field Map and Database

The Iowa Department of Natural Resources does not presently have a statewide database that compiles and cross references manure management plans (MMP). An MMP is a listing and analysis of fields that receive applications of CAFO manure. Hard copies are available through either a regional DNR office or a county Auditor's Office. To determine if fields receive manure from more than one CAFO requires sifting through an enormous amount of paperwork.

That has now changed for Jefferson County. Using MMPs obtained from the DNR and Jefferson County Auditor's Office, JFAN created a database and map listing every field receiving manure through 2017. Both are found on the JFAN website, [www.jfaniowa.org](http://www.jfaniowa.org).

The map allows you to view the entire county as well as each individual township and is color-coded by specific CAFO. MMPs of CAFOs located in the county, as well as confinements sited in other counties that apply manure in Jefferson County, are included.

Because the fields do not have standardized designations, the visual mapping makes it easy to see exactly which fields receive manure, and in particular, if more than one CAFO is applying to the same field. JFAN has already used the map to call in a formal complaint on Pine Pork's MMP.

Fields can sometimes handle manure from more than one CAFO. A formal complaint requires the DNR to do a detailed analysis to determine if too much manure is being applied to a field.

M.U.M. Sustainable Living student Gerrie Stood created the map under JFAN's direction. JFAN would like to thank Gerrie for the enormous time, effort, and ideas she put into the project. She undertook the creation of the database and map as part of an internship with JFAN and created a tool that will serve the county well.

### Neighbors Oppose Walnut Township CAFO

The DNR recently reversed a decision to approve a 2480-head CAFO to be built by David Eichelberger on land owned by Curt Pacha in Walnut Township. The CAFO, located in the far northeast corner of Jefferson County, was rejected in September after JFAN discovered that land listed on the manure management plan (MMP) was owned by one of the opposing neighbors.

JFAN has been working closely with neighbors on the CAFO since mid-summer, providing informational support and guidance. In August, board members attended a meeting with over 20 neighbors to discuss options. The neighbors found out about the CAFO through word of mouth before the DNR ever received paperwork.

Once the application was filed, JFAN reviewed the paperwork and discovered a field listed in the MMP was owned by one of the neighbors opposing the CAFO. The neighbor rented the land to Pacha,

but denied Pacha permission to apply manure and subsequently terminated his lease. The CAFO application and MMP was filed after Pacha was formally terminated as a tenant.

At JFAN's suggestion, the neighbor filed a formal complaint with the DNR, with copies of the complaint sent to the DNR's legal counsel and to the EPA Region 7 administrator and legal counsel. The CAFO had already been approved at that point, but the letter of approval had not been released. Upon receiving the formal complaint, the DNR reversed their decision, pulled the letter, and denied the CAFO.

The CAFO would be sited on high ground near the Skunk River. Many neighbors live at lower elevations by the river, making them potentially susceptible to concentrated hydrogen sulfide exposure as the heavy gas settles in depressions. Neighbors had met earlier with Eichelberger but were rebuffed when they asked him to not build.

The neighbors are in the process of organizing a community group and are in discussions with legal counsel should Eichelberger resubmit his application.

### Pine Pork Approved East of Pleasant Plain

A new 2480-head CAFO was recently approved by the DNR just east of East Pleasant Plain. The CAFO application lists Brandon Lange and Ryan Robertson as owners with Robert Deutsch the landowner.

As with all proposed CAFOs, JFAN sent out a letter to neighbors within a two-mile radius of the confinement. Several neighbors have contacted JFAN, and we are providing them with informational support. There is interest in getting a group together to oppose the CAFO.



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## In the News.....SPECIAL FOCUS ON ANTIBIOTIC RESISTANCE Part 2

# Pilot Meat Inspection Program Fails to Keep Food Safe

A pilot USDA meat inspection program is failing to identify contaminated meat during processing reports *The Washington Post*. The USDA plans to institute the inspection program in pork plants across the country, but the presence of fecal matter and partially digested foods on the meat products indicate there are serious shortfalls in the program according to a report issued this spring by the USDA inspector general.

The experimental program, in operation for the last 10 years in five U.S. hog plants, speeds the processing lines by up to 20% and reduces the number of USDA safety inspectors by 50%. Private inspectors are hired by the pork companies to replace the USDA inspectors.

Three of the top 10 pork processing plants in the country cited with the most health and safety violations are among those in the pilot program with the worst offender being one of the five.

Contaminated meat did not make it to the retail market because USDA inspectors caught the meats at the end of the processing line. But federal officials say discovering problems at this stage is too late, and they have repeatedly issued violations to the plants. Fecal matter and partially digested food found on the meat can spread dangerous bacteria, such as *E. coli*, to the general public.

Although the inspection process is still considered experimental, the U.S. has given the green light to other countries to use this process in plants processing red

meat. Canada and Australia have instituted these procedures, but over the last two years, these countries have also experienced numerous problems.

One Canadian beef processing plant had to recall 8.8 million pounds of beef and beef



products tainted with *E. coli*, of which 2.5 million pounds was exported to the US. The faster processing line was partially blamed for the problem according to Canadian government safety inspectors.

Since 2012, Australia had 11 shipments of beef, mutton, and goat meat stopped at U.S. ports because of contamination of fecal and other matter.

Despite the problems, the USDA plans to move ahead with completing its evaluation by spring and rolling out a set of rules for implementing the inspection sys-

tem on a national basis. One month before the report came out, USDA Undersecretary for Food Safety Elisabeth Hagen told trade publication *Food Chemical News* that she was "comfortable [with] and confident in" the experimental inspection program.

However, a Government Accountability Office report issued in September said that they would find it difficult to recommend the procedures nationally based on the pilot program because it was too small to "provide reasonable assurance that any conclusions can apply more broadly to the universe of 608 hog plants in the United States."

Six USDA inspectors working in the pilot plants spoke on the condition of anonymity to *The Washington Post* authors about their concerns. Plant supervisors yell at, threaten, and shun company and government workers if they try to slow the processing line or stridently complain about safety checks, they said, and the smaller numbers of USDA inspectors are compromising meat safety.

"We are no longer in charge of safety. That is what the public needs to know," one inspector with 15 years experience said in the *Washington Post* article.

The pilot program, begun in the late 1990's, was welcomed by the meat industry as a way to increase profits by processing higher volumes of product while reducing government oversight. The USDA embraced the system as a way to cut government spending.

**CDC** continued from p. 7

but has not issued any regulations.

Measures to restrict antibiotic use in livestock was introduced in the U.S. House of Representatives by Rep. Henry Waxman (D-CA) as early as 1980, and in the last several years, by microbiologist Rep. Louise Slaughter (D-NY) and recently by Senators Dianne Feinstein (D-CA) and Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY). All have hit dead ends.

In 2012, the Natural Resources Defense Council sued the FDA in an attempt to force the issue. The case is now pending before the 2nd U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals.

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# News Briefs

## FROM IOWA, THE US AND BEYOND

### N. Dakota Amendment Guarantees Farming Rights

A controversial amendment to the North Dakota Constitution now provides unlimited protection to factory farming practices in the state. Sponsored by the North Dakota Farm Bureau, the North Dakota Farming and Ranching Amendment is a reaction to animal welfare organizations that have been working to ban gestation crates and battery cages in various states.

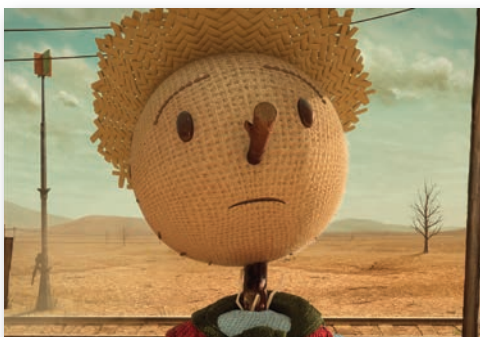
Broadly worded and vague, the amendment says, "The rights of farmers and ranchers to engage in modern farming and ranching practices shall be forever guaranteed in this state. No law shall be enacted which abridges the right of farmers and ranchers to employ agricultural technology, modern livestock production and ranching practices."

Giving the factory farming industry unfettered protection; the amendment also removes local control and preempts state and local laws. The amendment passed last November with 69% of the vote.

### Chipotle Video Draws Attention to Industrial Ag

Chipotle Mexican Grill released a new creative video advertisement in mid-September promoting its fast food chain as a corporation that sources food responsibly.

"The Scarecrow" is a somewhat surre-



alistic and moving 3-minute film that uses rich graphics and evocative music to depict a scarecrow's journey to bring wholesome food to city dwellers. A free, downloadable arcade-style adventure game for iPhone, iPad, and iPod Touch

reinforces the message, according to a Chipotle press release.

"The Scarecrow" film and game are designed to help educate people about the world of industrial food production. The film is set in a dystopian fantasy world where all food production is controlled by the fictional industrial giant Crow Foods.

Singer/songwriter Fiona Apple sets the tone throughout the film with a haunting cover of the song "Pure Imagination" from the movie *Willy Wonka & the Chocolate Factory*.

According to *USA Today*, "The Scarecrow" is a taste of additional Chipotle releases to follow in 2014. Four TV-episode length "dark comedies" will take on the processed food industry.

The ad campaign is particularly targeting the Millennial market by predominantly relying on a social media campaign to spread the ads, reports *The Christian Science Monitor*. It received over 6 million views in its first week alone.

The game and the film were created in partnership with Academy Award® winning Moonbot Studios, and CAA Marketing, a division of Creative Artists Agency. The game is available for free download in the Apple App Store and the short film can be viewed at [scarecrowgame.com](http://scarecrowgame.com).



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## Feed Mill Under Construction 30 Miles West of Jefferson Co.

Cargill Pork is building a \$29 million feed mill in Hedrick, to be "strategically located" near raw supplies and hog finishing operations in southern Iowa and northern Missouri reports *The Des Moines Register*. The mill will also be near its processing plants in Ottumwa and Beardstown, Illinois.

Cargill's president Dirk Jones says the feed mill will help the company improve efficiency and reduce costs.

The new mill will also benefit the company's 21,500 acre hog production site near Dalhart, Texas. Cargill bought that facility in 2011 to increase pork production, and it's expected to reach full production capacity in 2015. It continues to increase the number of hogs sent to regional confinement sites, and the new feed mill is expected to supply feed to those operations.

Plans are for the mill to open in late 2014. Cargill is one of the largest pork producers in the US.

## Hormone-Rich Manure Impacts Aquatic Life

A new study published in *Environmental Science and Technology* suggests that CAFO manure is increasing hormone levels in nearby waterways, impacting aquatic life in specific ways, reports *Rodale News*.

Researchers analyzed water samples from three separate Midwest streams. One was by a field that received manure from beef and dairy cattle; the second by a field receiving swine manure and irrigation from lagoons containing pig and poultry waste. A third stream was by a field in which no animal manure was applied.

The study found that 80% of the water sampled in the first two streams contained hormones. In the two streams with hormone concentrations, fish diversity was reduced by 50% and fish death rates were 28% higher than the third stream close to the field without applied manure.

The hormones also affected schools of flathead minnows introduced into the streams. In the two streams with the high hormone concentrations, males accounted for 60% of the population compared to 48% in the non-contaminated stream. The authors wrote that a drop in male to female ratios could lead to a reduction in overall fish populations.

## Eight Communities Now Pursuing Legal Action Against CAFOs

Since the formation in May of the Speer/Middleton/Sykes legal team, created and headed up by JFAN's legal counsel David E. Sykes, eight communities representing five Iowa counties are moving ahead with legal action to fight the CAFOs in their neighborhoods.

These cases are being taken on a contingency fee basis, which gives each of these communities an opportunity to mount a fight without overwhelming legal costs.

Legal action is probably the strongest approach in fighting a CAFO. JFAN works with communities on all the other steps that can be taken prior to legal action being required.

JFAN concurs with the Iowa Pork Association guidelines that a discussion between neighbors and the CAFO owner is an important first step. Legal action is a neighborhood group's last resort, but often, the most effective.

## US Clears Smithfield Acquisition; Shareholders Approve by 96% Vote

The U.S. Committee on Foreign Investment (CFIUS) has approved the \$4.7 billion acquisition of Smithfield Foods by Shuanghui International Holdings Ltd. reports *Reuters*. A shareholder vote on September 24 sealed the deal with 96% of the vote in favor, representing 76% of the company's shareholders, reports the *Wall Street Journal*. The deal is the largest takeover of a US company by a Chinese corporation.

Some U.S. lawmakers voiced hesitation about the acquisition citing concerns with China's food safety record and the impact on domestic pork supplies.

"It remains unclear what factors the Committee took into account in making its decision. We still do not know if the potential impact on American food security, the transfer of taxpayer funded innovation to a foreign competitor, or China's protectionist trade barriers were considered," said Senator Debbie Stabenow (D- MI) in a *USA Today* article. Senator Stabenow is the head of the Senate Agriculture Committee.

CFIUS is a secretive government panel that, by law, is not allowed to discuss or comment on any acquisition they review. Their role is to evaluate potential national security threats that could result from a takeover by a foreign company. CFIUS primarily deals in the telecommunications, technology and national defense industries and not, typically, food and agriculture.

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**PR** *continued from p. 1*

collaborating with USFRA to portray a positive public image for industrial agriculture, which includes a series of public forums or "Food Dialogues." These groups claim to be advocates for all types of farms, which is but a thinly disguised effort to obscure their obvious pro-corporate/industrial agriculture bias. The USFRA website defines "food safety, animal welfare, water quality, and consumer prices and choices" as their major lines of defense.

Naturally, CAFOs are highlighted in the current "defense of farming" initiatives, since CAFOs are the epitome of so-called modern, industrial agriculture. Young families who own CAFOs are featured in videos as the faces of modern agriculture. These families talk about their love of farming, concern for their communities, and their commitments to caring for their animals and protecting the environment. "Breakfasts on the Farm" have become popular events where the public is invited to visit local farms for breakfast. CAFOs are touted as the only means many multi-generational farmers have for continuing the family tradition of farming.

The propaganda claims animals in CAFOs are actually treated more humanely than in previous non-confinement facilities. They claim confinement buildings are well ventilated to keep animals cool in the summer and can be closed in the winter to protect animals from the cold. Baby pigs are provided a warmer environment during winter farrowing, and farrowing crates protect them from accidental crushing by their mothers. They claim slotted concrete floors provide a much cleaner environment than do open lots or pastures, and efficient ventilation systems provide animals with plenty of clean, fresh air. CAFOs are portrayed as

veritable pork palaces where happy pigs lead peaceful lives of perpetual comfort.

Proponents also claim that CAFOs are actually better for water quality, and the environment in general, than were the pastures or open feed lots. They tout the effectiveness of modern manure management systems, with comprehensive manure plans that include details of where and when manure will be spread. Modern manure storage facilities that



"Breakfast on the Farm" is a popular event where families visit nearby "modern" or "progressive farms", as the agricultural industry likes to call them.

allow manure to be spread only one or two times a year are replacing open manure "lagoons," thus minimizing any odor problems for neighbors. CAFO proponents claim that neighbors who continue to complain about odors or water quality problems are people from cities who have moved into rural areas and don't understand the environmental realities of farming. After all, CAFOs are subjected to strict U.S. and state environmental regulation, so they claim.

CAFO proponents respond to food safety concerns with proclamations that Americans have the safest, most healthful food system in the world. They tout the biosecurity and other sanitation measures taken by CAFOs as a reflection of commitment by

modern agriculture to ensuring food safety as well as minimizing diseases. Organic, free-range, pasture-based, and other systems of livestock and poultry production are touted as means of providing consumers with choices. The clear message is that other producers should reciprocate by not saying anything derogatory about CAFOs. Whenever food safety concerns break through into headlines, however, CAFO advocates are quick to direct public scrutiny to organic production practices or to smaller, less-regulated operations, such as farmers markets and direct sales of raw milk. Laws against criticizing industrial food products (veggie libel laws) have been largely ineffective, so industrial agriculture has turned to public relations as a means of silencing criticism. Continuing concerns regarding a variety of public health risks associated with CAFOs are brushed aside as being anecdotal and lacking in scientific credibility.

In an attempt to seal their case, proponents claim CAFOs are the only means of providing consumers with adequate quantities of meat, milk, and eggs at affordable prices. The groups point to the growth in CAFOs as clear and compelling evidence that CAFOs are simply a rational producer response to consumer demand. They argue that CAFOs could not have displaced the smaller livestock and poultry operations if CAFOs were not more economically efficient in providing the products that consumers need and want. Even if some consumers have concerns about animal welfare, the environment, and food safety, proponents claim that such concerns are small prices to pay for the economic benefits of CAFOs. Nothing worthwhile in life is ever without some risks. Obviously, more people are concerned about keeping prices low than about any



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added risks associated with CAFOs; otherwise we wouldn't have CAFOs.

In general, CAFO proponents blame growing public concerns for animal welfare and environment issues on radical "animal rights" and environmental groups that are more concerned about funding their organizations than protecting animals or the environment. Those who are concerned about food safety and the demise of family farms are labeled as "Luddites" or "idealists" who resist progress or long to return to some idealistic past that never really existed. After all, farmers depend on healthy animals and fertile soil for their livelihood, they say. Voluntary compliance with industry-defined standards of good management practices is all that is needed. The impersonal forces of a free-market economy have chosen CAFOs. Case closed!

Most long-time veterans of the CAFO wars know the fallacies of such claims, but proponents are banking on being able to sell their pro-CAFO propaganda to a largely-uninformed general public. This means that CAFO opponents must be willing to move their battles beyond the concerns of rural communities and into the larger arena of general public opinion. Although CAFO opponents lack the corporate funding of those who promote CAFOs, we have one important advantage: We don't have to rely on false propaganda; we only need to tell the truth.

First, we need to continually remind the public that opponents of CAFOs are not opponents of "real agriculture" or "real farming." Although there are many "bad actors" among CAFO owners and operators, in truth, many others are simply "good people" who have become entrapped in a "bad system." In fact, most opponents of CAFOs are actually proponents of animal agriculture. We oppose CAFOs because they are the epitome of everything that is wrong about large-scale, specialized, standardized, corporately-controlled industrial agriculture.

We also need to admit that it may be theoretically possible to plan, construct, and operate a CAFO in a manner that would not threaten the natural environment or public health. The problem is that CAFOs don't operate in a theoretical world; they must cope with the vagaries of an unpredictable reality. CAFO operators can host "breakfasts on the farm" and visits by various dignitaries because, for at least for a few days, they can clean up their act and operate responsibly when it's needed for good public relations. While some CAFOs may not harm the environment some of the time, the hard, cold truth is that whenever a significant number are located in a given area, one or more of the CAFOs will be polluting the environment at any given time, and any one of them will be polluting at least some of the time.

If CAFOs are models of environmental

stewardship, why has the US EPA found 35,000 miles of rivers and groundwater in 17 states polluted by CAFOs? Why have the number of waterways labeled as "impaired" by the Iowa DNR jumped from 215 in 1987 to 642 in 2012, as CAFOs took over the Iowa hog industry? The fact that some streams are still clean and some water wells are still not contaminated, is not a logical defense. If such pollution is a result of irresponsible management, then irresponsible management obviously is widespread and ongoing among CAFO operators. The pollutants originating from CAFOs include nitrogen, phosphorus, antibiotics, pesticides, and heavy metals. Municipalities along these streams have been forced to add costly waste treatment facilities to mitigate the effects of CAFOs on their drinking water.

Why have massive "dead zones" been created in the Gulf of Mexico, Chesapeake Bay, and elsewhere by CAFOs and the large-scale, chemical-intensive, industrial corn and soybean operations that provide their feed grains. These consequences are not the result of a "few bad actors;" these are characteristic of an under-regulated "industry." The environmental regulation of CAFOs has been largely ineffective because CAFO proponents have convinced lawmakers that CAFOs are farms, not factories, and farming is exempted from many environ-

*PR continued on p. 16*

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**PR** *continued from p. 15*

mental regulations. Meanwhile, the “right to farm” has resulted in about 800 officially reported manure spills in Iowa since 1995, and the number of polluted streams and water wells continue to grow. These are facts, not propaganda.

If CAFOs are havens for humane care of animals, why have CAFO proponents promoted “Ag Gag Laws” in virtually every significant livestock producing state? These laws make it a crime for anyone, including employees of CAFOs, to take pictures that document animal abuse or environmental violations. There would be no motive for Ag Gag Laws if animals in CAFOs were treated as well every day as they are when the public is invited for “breakfast on the farm” or when visiting politicians are brought through on public relations tours. Real farmers should be proud to have scenes from their farms video recorded and shown on YouTube. The cold, hard truth is that while animals may appear to be well-treated in some CAFOs some of the time, some animals are horribly abused in some operations some of the time, and all suffer from “unnatural confinement” all of the time.

Admittedly, major anti-CAFO initiatives have been mounted by mainstream ani-

mal protection organizations, such as the Humane Society of the United States and the Farm Sanctuary. These initiatives have focused on providing more space for animals in confinement systems. However, there is simply no way that massive numbers of animals can be treated humanely while in the large confinement facilities that typify CAFOs. Farm animals did not evolve to live in confinement any more so than humans evolved to live in prisons. There is simply no opportunity to afford farm animals the dignity and respect that must precede humane treatment when the animals are confined in large-scale concentrated feeding operations. Animals are sentient, feeling, living organisms or beings, not inanimate mechanisms. Real farmers treat animals with dignity and respect – even when they ultimately are to be used for human food.

In response to the propaganda, we must stress that we are not opposed to farmers or ranchers, but we are opposed to any system of production that threatens the health and well-being of both rural and urban Americans. The CAFO promoters are using “good people” to protect a “bad system.” Until now, most of our efforts have focused on issues of greatest concern to people in rural communities. To confront the new propaganda campaign,

we must expand the perimeter of the battleground to embrace the growing concerns about broader issues, such as animal protection and public health. These are issues that affect everyone. These are the issues that have spurred CAFO proponents into their defensive strategies. These are the issues on which we can ultimately win the war against CAFOs. To win, we will need to build bridges between rural and urban America and go public with the growing concerns about CAFOs.

*Dr. John Ikerd, Professor Emeritus of Agricultural Economics at the University of Missouri, Columbia, has enjoyed a 30-year academic career at four major Land Grant Universities. He has served as Missouri state co-coordinator of extension programs in sustainable agriculture and as project leader for a three-state, five-year program, funded by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, that linked sustainable agriculture and sustainable community development. He has authored several books including **Sustainable Capitalism** and **A Return to Common Sense** and has received many honors for his work in agricultural economics. Dr. Ikerd is a member of JFAN.*



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