

# JFAN

JEFFERSON COUNTY FARMERS & NEIGHBORS, INC.



**FARMS, NOT FACTORIES!**

A Nonprofit Educational Foundation

Volume 6 ~ SPRING/SUMMER 2010

## JFAN GRANT SUPPORTS GRAND PRIZE STATE SCIENCE FAIR STUDY ON CAFOs

*MSAE Students Win a Multitude of Honors and Awards*



**Minna Mohammadi and Pearl Sawhney with numerous awards won at the State Science and Technology Fair of Iowa in March.**

Maharishi School sophomores Minna Mohammadi and Pearl Sawhney won top awards for a study examining animal feeds and water pollution at the March 20 State Science and Technology Fair of Iowa (SSTFI) held in Des Moines, Iowa. Their study, "Farm Feeding Practices: Exploring Solutions for Environmental Sustainability" examined the impact of various animal feeds on water pollution.

JFAN funded the study with an educational financial assistance grant. The students, grand prize winners in the high school division, will go on to compete, all-expenses paid, at the prestigious International Intel Science and Engineering Fair in San Jose, California in May.

Ms. Sawhney and Ms. Mohammadi compared the feeds of three types of cat-

tle farms – organic, conventional nonorganic, and CAFOs (confined animal feeding operations) – and sampled the water in tributaries downstream from each facility to determine if the feed type affected the level of phosphorus in the water.

Phosphorus is added to CAFO feed to compensate for the effect of antibiotics, which are also routinely fed to confined livestock. Antibiotics kill phytase, an important bacteria in the digestive system of cattle that allows for phosphorus to be absorbed by the body.

They hypothesized that with a highly digestible diet with no fortifications, such as organic feed, more phosphorus would be absorbed by cattle and less excreted than

**STUDY** *continued on p. 8*

## PLEASANT PLAIN LAWSUIT SETTLES

After a long and protracted legal battle, we are pleased to report that the Pleasant Plain lawsuit settled on March 5, 2010. The case was scheduled to go to trial on March 26th.

The Pleasant Plain Property Owners Association (PPPOA), representing 26 home owners, sued James Kaska and JL Pork, Inc. for building and operating a 1200-head hog confinement (CAFO) close to their homes. All the plaintiffs lived within a 1½-mile radius of the CAFO.

Although the actual settlement terms are confidential, JFAN understands that the plaintiffs in the case consider the settlement to be a very satisfactory outcome, beneficial to both the plaintiffs personally and the community-at-large.

The lawsuit was a long and costly process for all parties. JFAN provided the PPPOA and the individual plaintiffs with substantial financial assistance grants to help cover legal expenses.

The Parrish Kruidenier Firm, a well-known Des Moines law firm with a proven track record in litigation, along with Fairfield attorney David Sykes, represented

**PLEASANT PLAIN** *continued on p. 5*

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# JFAN NEWSLETTER

JEFFERSON COUNTY  
FARMERS & NEIGHBORS, INC

Volume 6 ~ SPRING/SUMMER 2010

**President**

Jim Rubis

**Executive Director**

Diane Rosenberg

**Editor-in-Chief and  
Art Director**

Diane Rosenberg

**Contributing Writer**

John Ikerd

**Distribution**

Terrell Welsh

**Legal Counsel**

David Sykes  
Fairfield, Iowa

**Accounting**

Fairfield Accounting and  
Brooks, Lodden, P.C., Des Moines, Iowa

**Webmaster**

Diane Rosenberg

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JFAN  
P.O. Box 811  
Fairfield, IA 52556  
(641) 209-6600  
www.jfaniowa.org  
jfan@lisco.com

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## OBAMA ADMINISTRATION BEGINS INVESTIGATION INTO FOOD MONOPOLIES

At an historic meeting in Ankeny, Iowa on March 12, nearly 800 farmers, labor workers, and farm advocates from across the nation gathered to hear top officials of the Obama Administration address how excessive market concentration and food monopolies are negatively affecting farmers, consumers, and life in rural America reports Dave Murphy in *The Huffington Post*.

Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack, Attorney General Eric Holder, and Department of Justice antitrust chief Christine Varney, along with a number of academics, economists, representatives from agribusiness giants and commodity groups, and farmers, met to begin a serious national di-

alog on food policy reform.

Many in the agriculture industry view Attorney General Holder's attendance as a sign that the Obama Administration is serious about the lack of competition in the food and agricultural industry. Holder commented on the "reckless deregulation that has restricted competition in agriculture," Murphy reports. He cited the threat of eroding free market competition and the impact of recessions and irresponsible deregulation on fostering monopolies.

Varney, who is credited as the leading force behind the antitrust hearings, promised a tough stance from her office.

**INVESTIGATION** *continued on p. 8*

## INDIANA LAWSUIT SEEKS TO CHALLENGE NATIONAL FACTORY FARM MODEL

Three high-powered trial lawyers are vowing to make Randolph County, Indiana "ground zero" in the national fight against industrial food production, reports the *Muncie Star-Press*. The lawyers are representing 17 plaintiffs who are suing four major food producers and several local operators on a series of complaints related to the operation of several factory farms.

Leading the charge is Indianapolis attorney Rich Haily, former president of the Association of Trial Lawyers of America, now called the American Association for Justice (AAJ). He is assisting Indiana Lawyer Richard Middleton, another former president of AAJ from Savannah, Georgia, and Kansas City attorney Charles Speers, who has won numerous nuisance judgments against large livestock farms in other states.

The team plans to file multiple lawsuits challenging the factory farm model in Indiana, which is currently being revitalized by Indiana's State Department of Agriculture. As a gubernatorial candidate, Indiana Governor Mitch Daniels ran on a platform of doubling Indiana's pork production.

A dozen or more cases are being filed against Vreba Hoff Dairy, an Ohio-based company that has factory farms in Indiana, Ohio, and Michigan; Maxwell Foods/Maxwell Farms, a major North Carolina-based pork producer that has expanded into Indiana; Harrisburg, Penn-

sylvania's Country View Family Farms; and various local CAFO operators.

Middleton credits environmental attorney Robert F. Kennedy, Jr. for encouraging him to take on the case. Mr. Kennedy is president of Waterkeeper Alliance and has waged a successful battle against CAFOs in North Carolina.

The lawsuits seek actual damages to compensate plaintiffs for "interference of their right to the use and quiet enjoyment" of their properties as well as punitive damages to both avenge their living conditions and to deter other potential CAFO operators and companies.

Highly aggressive flies, noxious odors, composting piles of dead animals, and massive manure mismanagement, including a manure spill, are cited in the lawsuits. The lawsuits assert that the defendants have failed to implement "reasonable and readily available technologies" to reduce odors.

The lawsuits also allege that plaintiffs have suffered from many health problems including skin irritations; nausea; burning eyes, noses, and throats; breathing difficulties; headaches; and tightness in the chest.

Middleton says one of the reasons Indiana has been targeted as ground zero is because of its friendliness to the vertically integrated, factory farm model.

## HOUSE FILE 2324 FIZZLES

*Update on JFAN's Email Alert on the Winter Manure Application Bill*

A vigorous public outcry from across Iowa killed House File 2324, a bill that would have gutted last year's new law that bans the application of factory farm manure on frozen and snow-covered ground, according to Iowa Citizens for Community Improvement (ICCI).

HF 2324 would have drastically weakened the new law by indefinitely exempting farms built prior to July 1, 2009, says Adam Mason, State Policy Organizing Director for ICCI. This bill would have affected approximately 5000 operations.

Proponents of HF 2324 claimed factory farms with inadequate manure storage would have had financial difficulties meeting the new requirements. The new law prohibits manure application on frozen and snow-covered ground from December 21 until April 4, a three and one-half month period. However, Mason points out that factory farms don't apply manure during the seven-month growing season. "Poor management is not an excuse to pollute," he said.

HF 2324 was originally introduced into both the House and Senate before the first legislative funnel in February. While the Senate did not advance the bill through committee, the House passed it through full committee in less than 24 hours.

ICCI led a campaign to stop the bill, organizing an email campaign, petitions, and a February 22 Lobby Day at the State House where they met with Jim Larew, Governor Culver's General Counsel and Top Policy Advisor, and other lawmakers. According to Mason, Larew said the governor was "not interested in weakening last year's good bill."

Last year, the Environmental Protection Agency came down strongly in favor of a ban without exceptions. HF 2324 would have been a clear violation of the Clean Water Act and would have also undermined the Iowa Department of Natural Resources' authority to regulate factory farms.

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WWW.JFANIOWA.ORG**

## AREA SCHOOLS RELISH THE TASTE OF FRESH LOCAL FOODS

Six school districts, including Fairfield Community Schools are enjoying the fruits of the local growing region. The Hometown Harvest Farm to School Program is providing funding for schools to purchase locally grown produce, dairy products, and meats.

Funded through a nearly \$92,000 grant from The Wellmark Foundation, the Farm

to School Program increases an awareness of better health and healthy eating, says Elisabet Humble, Local Food Coordinator for Hometown Harvest, a regional food system working group and the local chapter of Buy Fresh Buy Local.

"Food service directors rave about the quality of the food," says Ms. Humble.

The two-year program provides matching funds for local purchases, providing 50% of the dollar amount spent. This cost/share arrangement makes it easier for schools to continue with the program once funding ends, she says.

Ms. Humble connects food service directors with regional food producers. How each school administers the program differs. "This is such a community-based, grassroots effort. It takes on a lot of shapes and flavors," she says.

Fairfield purchases beef from the Leighton Locker and eggs from CR Eggs, while Van Buren buys produce for their salad bars. North Mahaska's food service director shops at their Farmer's Market.

The program also includes educational outreach. "We are working to get more and more Farm to School curricula into classes," says Ms. Humble,

Other projects include school gardens, such as the vegetable garden planted at Fremont. Van Buren is also considering a vegetable patch, and Fairfield is currently looking into fruit trees. North Mahaska is even interested in raising their own hogs.

Ms. Humble also works with 4H Clubs, organizing cooking classes and developing school gardens as a community project.

She admits that it's easier for some schools to embrace the program than others citing staffing, kitchen infrastructure, and storage as obstacles that can crop up. "It's interesting to see how school systems are able to work with this. It's a lot easier for smaller schools to pick up Farm to School – they have more flexibility and can adapt more easily."



Fairfield has readily jumped into the Farm to School program by purchasing local food. "However budget cuts, the size of the school district, and No Child Left Behind mandates have left significantly little

room to incorporate Farm to School curricula in the classrooms," Ms. Humble says.

One of the program's hurdles involves purchasing and delivery from different growers as this can get a bit unwieldy. But Ms. Humble is pulling together a group of producers willing to work as an alliance. "This will make it easier to sell to schools – and should solve delivery challenges with a sustainable solution."

For information on the Farm to School Program, contact Elisabet Humble at 641-472-6177 or [elizabet@pathfindersrcd.org](mailto:elizabet@pathfindersrcd.org).

### INFECTIOUS MRSA IN CANADA

Researchers have found a strain of methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA) primarily associated with pigs has infected humans in Canada reports *Emerging Health Threats Forum*. While this particular strain, livestock-associated MRSA (LA-MRSA), has been asymptotically colonizing in livestock and farmers in both the US and Canada, these are the first incidences of reported infectious cases in North America.

The research team, led by George Golding of the National Microbiology Laboratory in Winnipeg, Canada, published their findings in *Emerging Infectious Diseases* in March.

Potentially fatal, antibiotic-resistant LA-

**LA-MRSA** continued on p. 5

# ECONOMIC FALLACIES OF INDUSTRIAL HOG PRODUCTION – PART 2

**BY DR. JOHN IKERD  
PROFESSOR EMERITUS  
UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI**

*The following is an abridged excerpt from Dr. Ikerd's full presentation to the Sustainable Hog Farming Summit on January 2001. JFAN printed the first excerpt in the Fall 2009 newsletter.*

**Fallacy: Contract hog production is the only means by which family hog farmers can gain the access to the capital, management, technology, and markets they will need to survive.**

The advocates claim that family farmers have no future in hog production unless they engage in comprehensive production contracts with agribusiness corporations. They claim that economies of size in hog production are such that hog operations will have to be far larger than a feasible-sized family hog operation in order to be cost competitive.

**Fact: Family hog farmers can survive and prosper by taking advantage of their unique assets – their willingness to work, their commitment to farming, and their skills in animal husbandry and business management.**

Management is more important than the size of the operation in determining the economic efficiency of a hog operation. Farm records collected by various state universities have consistently indicated that 20-40% of family hog farms are as cost efficient as the large-scale, corporate hog operations. So even with current production methods, a well-managed family hog operation can compete with the large-scale corporate hog operations.

Common sense tells us that hog farmers who sign comprehensive production contracts are not going to get much benefit out of their contract operations. The four basic factors of production are land, labor, capital, and management. Each of these factors earns an economic return.

In an industrial hog operation, land doesn't contribute much to total returns. In a typical

contract operation, the facilities are generally new, built to contract specifications, and most of the money is borrowed. The contract producer provides nearly all of the on-site labor in a contract operation. However, these hog operations are highly mechanized, and all production procedures are highly standardized. The contractor provides all of the production technology. The on-site labor



is basically the work of a janitor or building supervisor. So the contract producer can't expect to earn much more than minimum wage for his or her labor.

All of the significant management decisions, such as selection of facilities design, genetic stock, health program, breeding dates, when to place on feed, feeding system, when to price, when to deliver, are all made by the contractor – not the producer. In addition, the contractor takes most of the production and market risks, so there is little opportunity for the producer to earn a profit over and above the value of their contract labor. They may earn a decent return on their capital investment, if they are able to keep a favorable contract for the useful life of their buildings and equipment, but by the time everything is paid for, it will likely be worn out.

In summary, the contract producer doesn't really contribute much to a contract hog operation, and thus, can't expect to get much back in return. The contractor takes most of the risks. So, the contractor is going to make the money – not the producer.

If family hog operations are to survive and prosper in the future, it will be with systems that require high levels of skill in animal husbandry and all aspects of

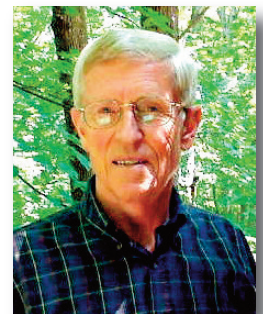
production management. Successful family hog operations also are going to have to break away from the highly integrated production and marketing systems – independent producers are quickly losing access to traditional markets. Family hog farmers of the future must have their own direct “linkage” with their customers – either individually or through joint ventures with other independent producers.

The bottom line is that contract production is not a sensible alternative for the future of family hog farms. Contract hog operations benefit the contractor, not the family hog farmer.

**Read the full article: <http://tiny.cc/vk7R3>**

*Dr. John Ikerd, Professor Emeritus of Agricultural Economics at the University of Missouri, Co-*

*lumbia, has enjoyed a 30-year academic career at four major Land Grant universities. He has served as Mis-*



*souri State 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 four books and has received many honors for his work in agricultural economics.*

## **WANTED ADMIN. ASSISTANT FOR JFAN**

Part-time paid position to assist with a variety of administrative duties. Responsibilities include:

- Mailings
- Monitoring and responding to phone and email messages
- Annual meeting assistance
- Monitoring CAFO development with the DNR
- Newsletter delivery and pickup

The hours are flexible and vary with projects. Should be proficient in Word and Excel.

Please send a resume and letter of interest to [jfan@lisco.com](mailto:jfan@lisco.com)  
Attention: Diane Rosenberg

# OUR ACTIVITIES AT A GLANCE:

## JFAN WORKING HARD FOR YOU

### JFAN Helps Ensure Land Protection

Six tracts of land owned by Maharishi Vedic City were sold at an auction on December 15 and 16 to several farmers and developers, according to a December 24 article in the *Fairfield Ledger*. Most of the 600 acres sold was organic farmland, and one tract included the former Ideal Girls School across the road on Highway One from Books Are Fun.

Prior to the sale, JFAN consulted with Maharishi Vedic City officials providing advice and information on how to maintain environmental stewardship of the land through the sale.

As a result, all the tracts were sold with covenants prohibiting the construction of CAFOs or aerial use of pesticides. Several tracts of land, including a 160-acre parcel at the southwest corner of the Maharishi Vedic City city limits, include a stipulation that the land be organically farmed.

### Food, Inc. Draws Full House at Morning Star

One hundred fifty people hungry for the truth about what we eat turned out for JFAN's November 28 screening of *Food, Inc.* The Academy Award nominated documentary by producer/director Robert Kenner takes a critical view at what is sold as food in today's supermarkets.

*Food, Inc.* exposes the real cost of "cheap" food and how it impacts consumer health, the livelihood of American farmers, worker safety, and the environment.

Following the film, a lively panel discussion and Q & A featured Francis Thicke, co-owner and co-operator of Radiance Dairy; organic farmer Steve Hickenbottom; Mary Carter and Elisabet Humble of Buy Fresh Buy Local; and organic farmer Dean Goodale who directs Maharishi Vedic Organic Farms.

JFAN sponsored the screening in partnership with Radiance Dairy, Buy Fresh Buy Local, Sustainable Living Coalition, Sierra Club, and KRUE-FM.

The film is now out on DVD and is highly recommended for anyone who cares about what they consume. For more information on *Food, Inc.*, and to

take action to support healthier food production, visit [www.foodincmovie.com](http://www.foodincmovie.com).

### JFAN Annual Meeting Fills Convention Center

Over 500 people flocked to the Fairfield Arts & Convention Center for JFAN's Annual Meeting on October 7. People traveled from throughout southeast Iowa to hear Dr. John Ikerd, Francis Thicke, Ed Fallon, and Dave Murphy give dynamic presentations on the economics, politics, and future of CAFOs and sustainable agriculture alternatives.

A question and answer session allowed audience members to present a range of questions to Dr. Ikerd, Mr. Thicke and Mr. Murphy.

Mr. Fallon, a former state legislator, co-owner of I'm for Iowa, and radio show host, also broadcast his show "Fallon's Forum" live from the lobby of the FACC. Audience members got to enjoy several selections by singer/songwriter Arthur Lee Land prior to the event.

Plans are now underway for JFAN's next annual meeting tentatively scheduled for October.

### Annual Meeting DVD Available

If you missed last October's energizing JFAN Annual Meeting – or want to share it with some friends – DVD's of the entire meeting are now available for sale. To purchase one, please visit our website at [www.jfaniowa.org](http://www.jfaniowa.org) or give us a call at 641-209-6600. Copies are \$9 each.

### LA-MRSA *continued from p. 3*

MRSA, first discovered in Dutch hog farmers in 2005, is found in farmers and livestock worldwide. The strain has been found to spread between people as well.

The rate of LA-MRSA in the general population is low. It's occurrence in farmers and veterinarians, however, is very high, although the incidence of infection has thus far remained small. Twenty-five percent of all Canadian pig farmers carry LA-MRSA, as do 45% of all US farmers according the Golding study. Other studies have found LA-MRSA rates to vary in European countries between 26-45%.

### PLEASANT PLAIN *continued from p. 1*

the PPPOA.

The Pleasant Plain lawsuit was filed about four years ago after Mr. Kaska and JL Pork constructed the 1200-head CAFO. The CAFO is located near Pleasant Plain Road and 167th Street, about three miles north of Fairfield.

Prior to construction of the CAFO, several neighbors met with Mr. Kaska requesting that he not build the CAFO at the proposed location as it would diminish their quality of life and peaceful enjoyment. JFAN provided educational support to the neighbors during this period. Several attempts to resolve the matter without litigation failed, and the CAFO was constructed. The lawsuit was filed on May 19, 2006.

The lawsuit charged that the massive amounts of animal waste generated by the facility harmed the health, safety, and quality of life of the plaintiffs, the public, and the environment. It alleged there was a significant risk of groundwater contamination from the CAFO and the spreading of liquid manure.

The plaintiffs further asserted that the noxious chemicals created by the untreated liquid manure, unhealthy and unpleasant odor, and harmful airborne particulates emanating from the facility constituted a nuisance and threatened the quiet enjoyment of their homes and land.

Additionally, the lawsuit contended that the facility reduced the property values of the 14 homes owned by the plaintiffs.

The plaintiffs requested to be reasonably and justly compensated for the nuisance.

The trial was originally scheduled for March 2009 in Jefferson County, but was postponed several times. Ultimately, the venue was changed from Jefferson County to Washington County.

JFAN is pleased to have been able to support the plaintiffs and to help in effectuating a positive result in the fight against the proliferation of CAFO's and their harmful side effects in Jefferson County.

JFAN would like to express its appreciation to all its supporters who have made it possible for the residents of Jefferson County to continue to enjoy fresh and healthy air and clean water.

**JFAN Financial Assistance  
Grants for Alternative Farming  
[www.jfaniowa.org](http://www.jfaniowa.org)**

# NEWS BRIEFS

## FROM IOWA, THE US AND BEYOND

### Major Network Airs Report on Antibiotics

Antibiotic overuse in industrial agriculture is getting some attention in the mainstream media. On February 9 and 10, the *CBS Evening News* aired a two-part investigative report by Katie Couric on antibiotics in factory farming. Antibiotics are routinely used on healthy factory farm livestock to promote growth and prevent disease. Research is finding that such use leads to antibiotic-resistant microorganisms.

Couric examined the extent of antibiotic use and its link to the spread of drug-resistant MRSA. Featured in the first segment are the veterinarian Liz Wagstrom with the National Pork Board who denied antibiotics are routinely administered as well as Joshua Sharfstein, Deputy Director of the Federal Drug Administration. Sharfstein called for a ban on routine antibiotics at an earlier Congressional hearing.

Couric covered the "Danish experiment" in the second segment, in which Denmark stopped using sub-therapeutic antibiotics on their hog farms with no adverse affects. She also interviewed the owners of two antibiotic-free food companies, Applegate Farms and Koch's Turkeys, who shared how farmers can easily move away from antibiotic use.

To view the show visit <http://tinyurl.com/y75fawp> and click on the link in the Grist article.

### Manure Release Causes Fish Kill in Washington County

Between 4,000 to 5,000 gallons of hog manure was released into an Indian Creek tributary during a December application at an NPKK Pork, LLC facility in Washington County reports the Iowa DNR.

Mark Heiderscheit, environmental specialist with the DNR's Washington office, said the manure applicator filled his tank from an earthen storage basin next to the facility then left to apply the manure. The basin's stirring device, used for mixing the solid and liquid manure for application, was left on and it shifted, spraying manure outside of the basin.

Employees with NPKK Pork dammed the

tributary and pumped the polluted water out of the stream to be knifed into the ground. Water samples were taken that day and the next near the tributary. On the second day, Mr. Heiderscheit found ammonia levels at 0.8 milligrams per liter. The background level of ammonia in Iowa is 0.5 mg per liter.

Mr. Heiderscheit also followed the tributary downstream and found a small fish kill.

The investigation is still ongoing, says Mr. Heiderscheit. Enforcement action is pending.

### Another Chain Gravitates To Humane Animal Treatment

Sonic, the drive-in restaurant chain, is responding to pressure from the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) to



purchase humanely raised meats, reports *Pork Magazine*. The chain will soon require its suppliers to conduct independent animal-welfare audits to ensure the proper handling of their livestock and poultry.

Sonic will reject suppliers that repeatedly fail their animal welfare guidelines.

The company also wants poultry suppliers to use a controlled-atmosphere slaughtering system and will give preferences to hog suppliers who don't use gestation crates. Companies supplying eggs are required to meet the housing standards of United Egg Producer. Sonic's animal welfare guidelines also reject suppliers who manage beak trimming improperly and who deny food and water to chickens in order to get them to molt more quickly.

HSUS purchased shares in Sonic in order to bring a more humanely-oriented approach to purchasing meat and eggs to the chain. They have also recently purchased shares in Steak 'n Shake and Jack in the Box, two chains which have a

poor record of supporting animal welfare.

HSUS has influenced Burger King, Wendy's, Quiznos, Denny's, Hardee's, and Carl's Jr. to create policies that are more favorable to animal welfare.

### Iowa DNR Unveils New Livestock Database

The DNR has a newly updated animal feeding operations database that makes it easy to access information about more than 8,000 facilities the agency tracks, according to a DNR press release.

"People can now search by owner's name, the facility identification number, or geographically," said Gene Tinker, coordinator of the DNR's animal feeding operations program.

The database primarily covers those operations large enough to require approval for a construction permit (2500 finishing hogs). It also covers mid-size (1250 hogs over 55 pounds or 5000 hogs under 15-55 pounds) and larger operations that need a manure or nutrient management plan. While the database includes information on some of the smaller facilities in the state, not all small open feedlots or confinements are tracked in this system.

A report function on the database allows people to search by watershed, county, or region. "This information is great for planners and technical service providers," said Tinker. "It greatly improves their ability to estimate the density of animals in an area or to find a suitable site for a new facility."

You can find the database at <https://programs.iowadnr.gov/animalfeedingoperations/>. A help menu and user's guide are also available.

### A Couple of Good Reads on Factory Farming

#### *A Thoughtful Reflection on What to Eat*

When novelist Jonathan Safran Foer and his wife were expecting their first child, the acclaimed novelist started thinking, "What do I feed my son?" *Eating Animals* is the philosophical, literary, scientific, and investigative memoir that arose of that question. Safran Foer weighs carnivorousism against vegetarianism, and in the process, dives deeply into the nature of factory farming in the US today, writes Simon Kuper in *Financial Times* – *FT.com*.

Prior to his son's birth, Safran Foer

knew nothing about farming. However, three years of intense research, including clandestine, middle of the night visits to factory farms, gave him a clear picture that he explicitly describes.

*Eating Animals* does more than expose the vivid realities of factory farming. It explores the many stories our society uses to justify how and what we eat – folklore, pop culture, family traditions, national myth, facts and fictions – and how we use them to dull our food sensibilities.

For more on *Eating Animals*, visit [www.eatinganimals.com](http://www.eatinganimals.com).

### Activists Take on Corporate Farms

David Kirby's *Animal Factory: The Looming Threat of Industrial Pig, Dairy and Poultry Farms to Humans and the Environment* follows the work of three activists who have experienced the destructive toll of CAFOs in their communities, writes NPR reviewer Michael Schaub.

Mr. Schaub says Kirby's book combines the urgency of Upton Sinclair's *The Jungle* with the investigative reporting of Eric Schlosser's *Fast Food Nation*. The result – a non-fiction book that reads like a thriller.

Mr. Kirby, a 15-year journalist and author of the *New York Times* bestseller *Evidence of Ham*, chronicles the journeys of Helen Reddout, a teacher and orchardist from Washington state; Karen Hudson, an Illinois engineering troubleshooter and

farmer's wife; and Rick Dove, a Vietnam vet, fisherman, and North Carolina "river-keeper." Each works to counter the harmful environmental and health effects of CAFOs by mounting campaigns demanding better regulations. While each achieve a modicum of success, they nonetheless experience enormous frustrations and difficulties as they go up against corporate interests and uncoop-

erative politicians.

"Like Sinclair's and Schlosser's work, [*Animal Factory*] has the potential to change the collective American mind about contemporary food issues," says Mr. Schaub.

To read Michael Schaub's review and an excerpt from *Animal Factory*, visit <http://tinyurl.com/y2wykjk>.

**NEWS** *continued on p. 8*

## HELP JFAN HELP YOU

For over five years, JFAN has been working to stop the proliferation of CAFOs in Jefferson County. JFAN is a group of farmers and homeowners like you who deeply care about protecting the health, environment, and quality of life of Jefferson County residents.

Through community education, community service, and financial assistance grants, JFAN has helped to keep CAFO development at bay. Several potential CAFOs have been **stalled, stopped, or built away** from concerned neighbors because of our efforts. Our county has the lowest rate of new CAFO development in southeast Iowa. Jefferson County residents are among the most educated and organized in the entire state.

**It takes resources to do this**, and we are turning to you, fellow neighbors who are equally concerned with maintaining our high quality of life, to help us continue our efforts to protect you and your families. Together, we can work to preserve all that is important in our community and avoiding the devastating toll factory farms have wrought on many of our less fortunate neighboring counties.

Please consider giving generously to JFAN today, your "Insurance Policy for a High Quality of Life." Thank you for all you do.

*Please return this donation form below or visit our website at [www.jfaniowa.org](http://www.jfaniowa.org) to make a secure donation. JFAN is a 501(c)(3) educational foundation and your donation is tax deductible.*

*To learn more about how JFAN works, see "How JFAN Helps You: How You Can Help JFAN" on our website at [www.jfaniowa.org](http://www.jfaniowa.org).*

### 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  
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**City/State/Zip** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone** \_\_\_\_\_ **Email** \_\_\_\_\_

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**STUDY** *continued from p. 1*

with a less digestible diet. Since antibiotics greatly impact the absorption of phosphorus, and pesticides in nonorganic feed makes the feed harder to digest, they set out to see if they would find more phosphorus in waterways from the CAFO and non-organic farm than the organic farm.

Phosphorus is a significant water pollutant. In lakes and streams, it causes excessive algae growth. Along with nitrogen, it is a primary contributor to the development of the Dead Zone in the Gulf of Mexico. The students wanted to see if a local solution – altering cattle feed – could be used to solve a global problem.

Three water samples were collected on different days both upstream and downstream from each farm this winter. Ms. Sawhney and Ms. Mohammadi also collected the feeds from each farm. The cows at the organic farm were fed organic feed. The conventional farm had non-organic feed, and the CAFO used antibiotic and phosphorus-enriched feed.

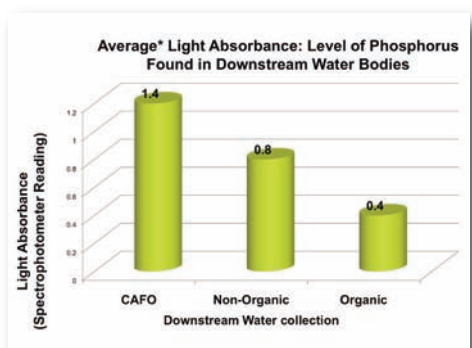
The water samples were tested for both phosphorus content and biological oxygen demand (BOD). Higher BOD levels are present in waterways choked with algae, as higher levels of oxygen are needed to break down algae after it has died.

The water samples collected upstream from each of the farms showed no meaningful difference in the phosphorus levels. However, Ms. Mohammadi and Ms. Sawhney found that the CAFO's phosphorus and antibiotic fortified feed showed the lowest amount of livestock phosphorus absorption and the highest levels of phosphorus and BOD in the downstream water samples. The organic farm showed the highest amounts of livestock phosphorus absorption with the lowest phosphorus and BOD levels in the water. The non-organic farm fell in the middle. (See charts)

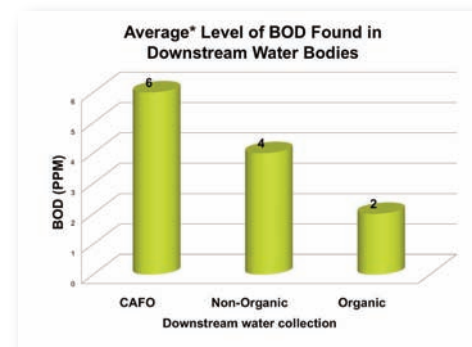
All results were statistically highly significant with a p value of <0.0001 (99.99% accurate).

The students concluded that CAFO feed is the least environmentally friendly of the feeds tested, and not as readily absorbable for the cattle as is popularly believed. Rather, organic feed was most beneficial to both the livestock and environment.

The study drew high praise from the science competition judges. For this project, Ms. Mohammadi and Ms. Sawhney won the Grand Champion Award at the



SSTFI as well as The Angus Auxiliary Award, The Hero of Planet Earth Award, The Hope Award, First Place in the Team Seminar Category, and First Place in the Environmental Science Category. In addition to the International Intel Fair, the students were also invited to compete at the National Environmental Fair.



Ms. Sawhney and Ms. Mohammadi plan to expand their research to incorporate more farms in a greater geographical area and to test in different seasons. They also plan to conduct a social-cost-benefit analysis of different feeding practices and to examine the impact of different feeds on the phosphorus content in milk and meat production.

**NEWS** *continued from p. 7*

**Missouri Farmers Win Lawsuit Against Major Producer**

A neighboring group of Missouri farmers won an \$11 million lawsuit on March 4 against hog production giant Premium Standard Farms, a subsidiary of Smithfield Foods, reports *The Huffington Post* and *KansasCity.com*. The group claimed that the overpowering toxic odors emanating from the facility causes nausea and forces them to remain indoors with their windows closed. The Premium Standard facility produced 200,000 hogs each year.

This was the second time Premium Standard Farms lost a lawsuit to neighboring farmers. A \$5.2 million penalty was

**INVESTIGATION** *continued from p. 2*

While the meeting began forcefully, the rest of the first day's meeting was somewhat watered down, Murphy reports. The workshop was originally to cover seed concentration, but wound up also including discussions on hogs, livestock, transparency, and buyer power.

In anticipation of the workshop, many farm groups and rural advocates were behind the scenes encouraging the USDA to incorporate a wider range of panelists, including progressive farmers and those most negatively hurt by excessive ag concentrations. This led to a several day delay in releasing the official panel list.

Fearing their voices wouldn't be heard over the voices of Big Ag and academics, a grassroots coalition of 250 farmers, union workers, food and farm justice advocates, and their family and friends held an emotional meeting the day before at an Ankeny hotel near the DOJ/USDA meeting. With the intention to bring attention to their plight, they demanded the administration "Bust Up Big Ag."

The Obama Administration will hold several additional meetings in major farming states focusing on concentrations in the dairy industry and the regulation of livestock producers according to a March 12 article from *In These Times*. This unprecedented investigation may lead to federal legal action and other potential reforms.

levied against them in 1999 when 52 plaintiffs sued them for odor problems. This recent lawsuit was filed when Premium Standard failed to clean up the problems cited in the original lawsuit.

Premium Standard has lost three of four jury trials waged by one attorney and his clients. The company has been ordered to pay nearly \$21 million. They say they will appeal this decision.

**Iowa Attorney General Sues Hog Farms**

Two Iowa companies were hit with a lawsuit from the Iowa Attorney General for allegedly failing to file manure management plans for their hog confinement facilities according to a February 4 article in *Radiolowa.org*. General Development and Kollasch Land and Livestock Incorporated, both of Whittemore, were named in the suit. The two companies are owned by brothers Charles and Luke Kollasch.