



## JFAN AND CCI HELP SOUGHT FOR CAFO SURGE THROUGHOUT STATE



Demonstrators opposing a Dallas County CAFO picketed in front of the owner's car wash.

Photo credit: Iowa Citizens for Community Improvement

### BY DIANE ROSENBERG EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Throughout Iowa, there has been a significant rise in the number of new or expanding CAFOs this year. A 25% drop in corn prices during the past year combined with three straight years of industry profit is driving a national expansion, reports Businessweek.com. Add to the mix the growing global demand for pork, which Governor Terry Branstad sees as a "great opportunity" for Iowa, and it's not surprising to see more confinements being built.

At the same time, communities are rising up more loudly than ever. At least 30 battles have been taking place through-

out 20 counties and gaining more attention in the press. Iowa Citizens for Community Improvement (CCI) is working closely with many of these groups.

JFAN's growing reputation throughout the state has attracted the attention of a number of groups, and we have received several phone calls and emails asking for our help. We have also reached out to assist other groups contending with unwanted CAFOs in their communities. JFAN has assisted these groups with educational support through phone meetings, print materials, and information on our website to help people navigate their situations. We also refer all groups to CCI for sustained attention.

**SURGE** continued on p. 4

## EPA: Iowa DNR MUST IMPROVE ITS REGULATION OF CAFOs

The US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) says the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) must improve how it regulates water pollution from CAFOs in a report released on July 12. The long-awaited report is in response to a petition filed nearly five years ago by three environmental groups, according to a *Des Moines Register* article and an Iowa Citizens for Community Improvement press release.

The EPA faulted the DNR on several points, including:

- Not issuing required Clean Water Act permits to CAFOs
- Not having an acceptable system to determine which factory farms need permits
- Not having an adequate inspection program
- Failure to act in cases of CAFO Clean Water Act violations
- Not following it's own response policy in nearly 50% of the cases the EPA reviewed
- Failure to assess adequate penalties for Clean Water Act violations.

The Iowa DNR must provide a formal written response and solutions within 60

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**JIM  
HIGHTOWER**

**JFAN ANNUAL MEETING**  
Wed. October 3rd, 7:30 pm  
Fairfield Arts &  
Convention Center

# JFAN NEWSLETTER

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## In the News.....

# LEGISLATIVE UPDATE 2012: WEAKENING ENVIRONMENTAL REGULATIONS AGAIN

**BY DIANE ROSENBERG  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

Once again, the Iowa State Legislature tried to dismantle environmental protections in this year's legislative session. Two bills hard fought by environmental groups were passed, some bills amended and weakened, many others defeated.

Here is an overview of this year's attempt to roll back regulations and environmental protections.

### Bills That Made It Through

**SF 2022** – New legislation was passed that allows CAFO owners to keep an unlimited number of breeding sows above and beyond the number declared on construction permits to use as replacement stock for sows that might die. This number could tally into the hundreds. An amendment to the bill requires them to be counted towards manure management plans.

Gestating sows are the largest of all hogs and generate the most manure. The bill passed with a majority of the vote in both the House and Senate with only Senator Joe Bolkam (D-Johnson) and a handful of others voting against.

**HF 589** – The "Ag Gag" Bill, which passed in a heavily amended form, received negative nationwide media coverage. Originally written to make photographing or otherwise recording abuses taking place at agricultural facilities a Class C felony, the bill was watered down to instead make it an aggravated misdemeanor to misrepresent oneself when applying for a job for the purposes of whistleblowing.

The penalty is a fine for one offence, but a repeat offence becomes a felony punishable by imprisonment. The new law takes an activity that was already technically illegal – misrepresentation during the

job application process – and enhances the penalty for whistleblowers that report on animal abuses. A *Des Moines Register* article reports that the ACLU of Iowa says the bill is so broadly written that an undercover law-enforcement operation could be considered illegal under the new law.

Big Ag says the bill is needed to protect them from activists who want to make them look bad as well as for protecting the health of pigs in confinements.

The law does not make taking photographs or videos from off the property a crime.

### Bills That Squeaked In

**HF 2199/SF 2116** – The Rulemaking Rolling Review would have gutted the rule-making authority by requiring the creation

of a citizen advisory committee for the Administrative Rules Review Committee (ARRC). For every rule, the committee would have to list the principal reasons for and against a rule, create a job impact statement, create ad hoc ne-

gotiated rulemaking groups, and review every rule on a five-year cycle to see if it still made sense. Opponents said this would cause the rulemaking process to be unduly influenced by corporate interests.

While this did not pass in and of itself, an amendment was added to the final Appropriations Bill that will require the ARRC to review a rule every five years to see if it still is applicable. Opponents say this still opens the door to industry influence.

**HF 2030** – Legislative Rule Approval Part 2 would have required any administrative rule with a fiscal impact to have full legislative and gubernatorial support before it went into effect. Advocate groups considered this rule redundant, undemocratic, and unconstitutional. Since HF 2030 did not pass, Governor

**LEGISLATION** *continued on p. 4*

## THE NUMBERS

**20 million** - Hogs in Iowa\*

**3.1 million** - People in Iowa\*\*

**58%** - Percentage of surveyed Iowans who say Iowa needs stronger laws to keep factory farms from polluting\*\*\*

\* Iowa Department of Agriculture, 2011

\*\* US Census Bureau, 2012

\*\*\* April 24-26 Public Policy Poll of 633 active Iowa voters, ±3.9% margin of error. Commissioned by Iowa Citizens for Community Improvement [www.iowacci.org](http://www.iowacci.org)



## COURT: FDA MUST TAKE ACTION ON ANTIBIOTICS IN LIVESTOCK

Two federal court rulings are requiring the FDA to finally take steps to reduce the use of antibiotics in industrial livestock, according to two National Resources Defense Council (nrdc.org) articles.

Since the 1970's, the FDA has recognized that the widespread use of antibiotics in industrial animals is contributing to the rise of antibiotic resistance in humans.

Eighty percent of all antibiotics sold in the US goes for growth enhancement and illness prevention in crowded, confined conditions. As early as 1977, the FDA proposed removing penicillins and tetracyclines because of their high usage in humans, but took little or no action to further that effort.

Under growing public pressure and some Congressional attention, the FDA withdrew their 1977

proposal in January and instead instituted a voluntary program for livestock producers to reduce antibiotic usage. In addition, they banned the use of cephalosporins in healthy animals, a drug comprising less than 0.25% of all US sales for livestock.

A lawsuit brought against the FDA by a coalition of environmental groups came to a head in March when a ruling by New York Magistrate Judge Theodore Katz addressed penicillins and tetracyclines, which together account for nearly half of all the antibiotics used on factory farms.

Judge Katz ruled that since the FDA had already found penicillins and tetracyclines in industrial livestock to spur antibiotic resistance in people, they were required to withdraw approval for their use unless drug manufacturers could prove they were safe through a series of hearings. In addition, he ruled that the FDA's voluntary approach did not meet legal requirements.

A second court ruling in early June requires the FDA to reopen a November decision that denied two Citizen Petitions filed in 1999 and 2005 demanding the elimination of routine antibiotic use in industrial livestock.

The FDA initially denied the petitions stating they favored a voluntary approach rather than taking the needed time and resources to research and review the request.

The Court wrote:

"The [FDA] must evaluate the safety risks of the petitioned drugs and either make the finding that the drugs are not shown to be safe or provide a reasoned explanation as to why the Agency is refusing to make such a finding...."

Five classes of antibiotics, including penicillin and tetracyclines, are included in the petitions.

The lawsuit was initiated by a coalition of environmental groups including National Resources Defense Council, the Center for Science in the Public Interest, Food Animal

Concerns Trust, Public Citizen, and the Union of Concerned Scientists. The FDA is currently appealing the March decision.



### EPA *continued from p. 1*

days of the report. The EPA will then open up a public comment period on the DNR's action steps.

Iowa Citizens for Community Improvement, Environmental Integrity Project, and the Sierra Club filed a petition in 2007 alleging widespread failures to regulate illegal factory farm discharges and asked the EPA to withdraw Iowa's authority to run the state's Clean Water Act permitting program. Last August, the three groups served the EPA with a Notice of Intent to sue because it failed to act on the petition, as reported in the *Fall/Winter JFAN Newsletter*.

The DNR has yet to issue a single Clean Water Act discharge permit to a confinement operation, or even to update its regulations to comply with federal rules for CAFOs that discharge pollution.

Read the full report, petition, and letter to the DNR here:

<http://epa.gov/region7/water/>

## CLEAR CONNECTION MADE BETWEEN ANTIBIOTIC-LACED FEED AND MRSA

Researchers have made a definitive connection between antibiotics in livestock feed and the growth of antibiotic resistant bacteria in humans, reports NPR.com.

A study by a team of researchers from the Translational Genomics Research Institute (TGen) illustrates how a strain of methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA) has jumped from humans into swine, became resistant to tetracycline and methicillin, and then jumped back to humans.

The study was published in the American Society for Microbiology's journal *mBio* in February 2012.

The research team, spanning 19 countries, conducted whole-genome analysis on 88 closely related variations of CC398, commonly known as MRSA, and proved "beyond a doubt" that the super bug jumped back to humans who had close exposure to affected livestock.

Principal researcher Lance Price says that the "pig MRSA" appears to be spreading to people without livestock exposure and has the potential to be a major health threat.

"We're seeing this one coming. The question is how often will this occur in the future if we don't start controlling antibiotic use?" Price says in the NPR article.

Overall, the percentage of "pig MRSA" thus far affecting humans is small, except that in the Netherlands, it accounts for 25% of all MRSA cases, indicating the potential to spread widely. According to another study author, Paul Keim, the research clearly shows that the solution is to ban antibiotics in animal feed, as was done in the European Union.

An earlier study by TGen, published in the *Spring/Summer 2011 JFAN Newsletter*, found that half of all the meats sampled in the US contained "pig MRSA." While cooking meats well kills the bacteria, the staph strain can be spread by unsafe handling of raw meat or cross contamination with other kitchen objects.

The American Meat Institute, along with other livestock groups, disputes the findings, attributing the results to human use of antibiotics.

Branstad issued an Executive Order that requires a fiscal impact statement for any rule that is passed. According to opponents, this extra job for a financially strapped state government could impact the speed in which a rule takes effect.

#### Bills That Did Not Make It

**HF 112** – This bill would have given veto power to the Director of the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to veto any regulation created by the Environmental Protection Commission (EPC). Since the governor appoints the director, environmental groups were concerned that one-sided political interests would rule. The bill passed out of the house, but didn't have as much support in the Senate, and was defeated.

**HF 2200** – The Legislative Rule Approval bill would have required any new rule or action on a rule be approved by legislators in a joint resolution and signed by the governor within one year of the date of the rule or action. This bill, which didn't pass in the House, would have made new rules or oversight nearly impossible to move ahead.

**HSB 519** – Corporate Property Tax Reform – This hotly contested bill proposed by Governor Branstad, and supported in a similar version by House Republicans, would have cut corporate property taxes, causing a \$200-400 million shortfall that would inevitably force local governments to cut local budgets. These corporations would have included factory farms. Senate Democrats offered a compromise to provide cuts for only small business owners. The Senate Democrats almost caved to Republican pressure, but two Democrats against the compromise, Senator Rob Hoag (D-Cedar Rapids) and Senator Jack Hatch (D-Des Moines), blocked the deal.

**HF 28** – Introduced by Representative Curt Hansen (D-Jefferson), HF 28 would restore local control to counties, allowing them to pass siting ordinances that determine where and when a factory farm could be built. The bill didn't make it out of the House Agriculture Committee.

*Iowa Citizens for Community Improvement closely follows the legislative session and was a primary source of information for this article.*

#### In the News.....

## HERITAGE PIGS DEEMED FERAL AND ILLEGAL BY MICHIGAN DNR

A 2010 Michigan order that went into effect in March makes it illegal to possess feral pigs, including heritage pigs bred by family farmers, according to Alternet.com.

In an attempt to protect native species, the Michigan Invasive Species Order (ISO), issued by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR), makes it a felony punishable by up to four years imprisonment, to possess a pig determined to be feral.

Many family farmers raise mangalista pigs, a black, woolly-haired pig with upright ears and a flat tail, prized for their marbled meat. The new rule says that such pigs are a threat to domestic hog production in the state.

The language of the law is somewhat vague, and it's up to the MDNR to decide if a pig falls under the feral category, regardless of how long they have been part of Michigan's agricultural mix.

The MDNR has taken aggressive steps to wipe out the pigs, including entering farms with government-issued rifles and killing the pigs on site. They contend that

because such pigs are raised outdoors, they have the potential to escape and become feral. Because of the exorbitant fines associated with the order, \$1000-\$20,000 per violation and jail time, some farmers are even beginning to shoot their own herds.

Opponents have cited the influence of the Michigan Pork Producer's Association in creating the rule. HarkelsOnline.com reports that mangalista farmer Mark Baker testified before the Michigan Senate Agricultural Committee to ask the senators to rescind ISO prior to its taking effect. Initially the committee appeared it would grant

the request or rule for a 90-day stay. Following the committee meeting, lobbyists for the Michigan Pork Producer's Association requested private meetings with committee members, and support for Baker's request evaporated.

Baker, along with three other plaintiffs, is now suing the MDNR over ISO.

A legal defense has been set up and donations may be made by visiting <http://vbs20.com/bakers/>.



#### SURGE *continued from p. 1*

The following are several examples of individuals and groups with whom JFAN has been working in the past six months.

**Black Hawk County:** JFAN has been in continued dialogue with a crop farmer in Jesup opposing a 1200-head cattle feedlot to be built 2600 feet from his home. This neighbor has invested \$50-60,000 in home improvements and is very concerned about losing the value of his investment. Cattle feedlots are known to be even more malodorous than hog confinements. He was especially upset because the CAFO owner had torn down a house and a dense row of trees that would have served as an odor barrier.

Since he is a farmer, one of JFAN's primary pieces of advice was to not accept the manure for land application and to ad-

vocate the same of other farmers in the area, which he has successfully done. Because of the size of the feedlot, the owner does not have to apply for construction permits or a manure management plan. The neighbor is continuing to look at other options, and it appears that the owner may now be looking at other locations.

**Wright County:** A Michigan-based company is building two 2400-head CAFOs less than a half-mile away from a resident who owns a century farm. Twenty-six people live less than one mile from the proposed confinements. This resident contacted JFAN immediately after finding our booklet, *How to Protect Your Family and Home from Factory Farms* on the Internet. We have given her many angles to try to stop the facility.

**SURGE** *continued on p. 7*



# OUR ACTIVITIES AT A GLANCE:

## JFAN WORKING HARD FOR YOU

BY DIANE ROSENBERG  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

### Brighton Finishers on Hold, KK Finishers Withdrawn

An expansion to Brighton Finishers is temporarily on hold as owner Ryan Robertson continues to request extensions from the DNR. A construction permit and Master Matrix expanding the 2490-head CAFO to 3690 hogs was originally requested last December.

In a December 2011 public hearing, the Jefferson County Board of Supervisors originally recommended that the Master Matrix be approved contingent on the manure management plan being approved by the Iowa DNR. At the hearing, JFAN contested the validity of the manure management plan.

Prior to the hearing, JFAN Board Member Francis Thicke visted the fields upon which the manure would be spread. He noted that the tillage specified on the manure management plan did not match the tillage he observed. A highly tilled field can't handle as much manure than a lightly tilled field, and Thicke observed and photographed fields more highly tilled than indicated on the manure management plan. As a result, Thicke filed a complaint with the DNR.

In a January 2012 meeting with the DNR's Gene Tinker, Head of Animal Operations and others from the Washington DNR office, JFAN presented this issue as well as a finding that Robertson was applying manure to fields that, in total, were being used by three CAFO manure management plans. According to JFAN's calculations, the amount of manure exceeded the land's absorption ability. The DNR didn't know about the third CAFO as they do not have computerized records for cross-reference.

The complaint was referred to the National Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) of the US Department of Agriculture to investigate. Members of the NRCS were to visit the fields in question, but Robertson has refused access to his property. As a result, the expansion has stalled while Robertson has requested a series of monthly extensions. A CAFO operator can request an unlimited number

of extensions from the DNR.

Robertson's other CAFO, KK Finishers, was withdrawn prior to a public hearing after county supervisors voted to deny approval of that Master Matrix at its January 16 weekly board meeting. The supervisors noted that Mr. Robertson took 25 points for the Homestead Tax Exemption. Individuals qualifying for these points must have a home on the same property as the confinement or on a contiguous piece of land. There is no home there, nor does he live on a contiguous piece of property. The loss of those points put the Master Matrix below 440 points.

JFAN will continue to monitor any developments to both of those facilities.

### Volunteers Help JFAN Distribute 900+ Books Throughout Iowa

JFAN donated over 900 impressive, educational books on confined animal feeding operations in June to state and local officials, universities, and a selection of libraries with the help of an enthusiastic group of JFAN volunteers.

The book, *CAFO: The Tragedy of Industrial Animal Factories*, edited by Daniel Imhoff, is an illustrated compendium of essays by today's leading thinkers on food and agriculture. With over 450 illustrations and writings by such luminaries as Wendell Berry, Fred Kirschenmann, Michael Pollen, Robert Kennedy, Jr. and Eric Schlosser, the book explores the state of modern food production and offers a compelling vision for how to produce healthy, affordable food without destroying our resources, public health, or local economies.

*CAFO: The Tragedy of Industrial Animal Factories* was sent to all of Iowa's state legislators, county supervisors, county conservation boards, county public health departments, and many administrative members of the Iowa Departments of

Natural Resources, Agriculture and Land Stewardship, and Public Health. In addition, nearly all Iowa's colleges and universities received a copy as well as a selection of 115 public libraries covering all county seats and large cities.

JFAN received a grant covering the cost of the book and distribution from the Deep Ecology Fund of the Tides Foundation. Watershed Media, creators of the book and in charge of national distribution, contacted JFAN after learning about our organization online. Our wide distribution program was hailed as one of the largest dispersals of the book to date.

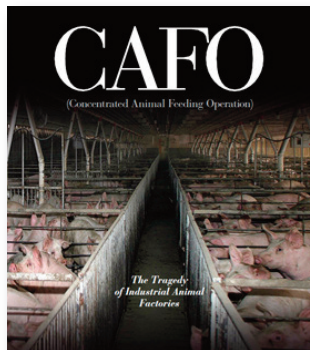
Locally, JFAN sent copies to Representative Curt Hansen, Senator Sandy Greiner, and to County Supervisors Steve Burgmeier, Dick Reed, and Lee Dimmitt. All three supervisors, Burgmeier, Reed and Dimmitt, refused the book.

JFAN will also receive another shipment of 500 books in the fall to distribute at the October 3 Annual Meeting. All attendees will receive a copy and may choose from either a hard cover edition or a limited number of soft cover versions, which contain the essays without the photographs.

JFAN deeply thanks all the volunteers who donated their time and energy to packing up and mailing the books: Kerry Bell, Elitza Blough, Patrick Bosold, Cindy Kaynor, June Oliver, Tommy Price, and Tim Simmons. We especially thank Mark Ungerer, JFAN's student intern, who put together the distribution plan, JFAN administration assistant Debra Findlay, who conducted research and finalized the mailing lists, and Fred Rosenberg who provided technical research and support for the mailing. The success of this project was made possible by everyone's dedication and support.

### New CAFO Built Outside Pleasant Plain City Limits

A 2480-head wean to finish hog confinement owned by David Horras was constructed just south of the city of Pleasant Plain. JFAN alerted neighbors within a 2-mile radius, according to our standard policy, spoke at length with one individual who was initially interested in fighting the confinement, and reviewed the manure management plan and construction permit. Since this CAFO is under 2500 head, a Master Matrix was not required. JFAN understands no further action was taken by interested parties in the Pleasant Plain area.



# NEWS BRIEFS

## FROM IOWA, THE US AND BEYOND

### Exploding Hog Barns Baffle Scientists

Scientists are mystified by an expanding foam that can grow in underground manure pits, trap methane gas, and cause an explosion. Six farms have exploded since 2009, reports *Wired.com*.

Approximately one quarter of all Midwest hog farms contain the foam, which grows on top of the manure pit. Researchers don't yet understand the nature of the foam, where it comes from, and how it starts.

The bubbly foam, "a gelatinous goop that resembles melted brown Nerf", traps methane, an explosive gas produced by the anaerobic manure. Fans routinely blow methane out of the confinements before it has the capacity to explode. The foam, which can be as deep as four or more feet, retains the methane at rates 200 times higher than what is considered dangerous. If the bubbles are disturbed, massive amounts of methane are quickly released, and a spark can cause it to explode. The latest incident in September 2011 that killed 1500 hogs and injured a worker resulted from a routine metal repair.

Speculation on the causes includes new bacterial communities that generate in the foam; a change in the molecular structure of hog waste from, for example, new feed; or new soap used to clean pits that might contribute to the formation of the bubbles. One promising finding links the foam to the amount of distiller's grain in hog feed, which quadrupled from 2001-2003. This lead is still too early to qualify.

Yet the patterns are inconsistent. On farms with more than one confinement with identical operations, the foam can appear in one building, but not another. In addition, once the foam appears, it remains established regardless of clean up and decontamination efforts.

Angela Kent, a microbial ecologist at University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign doesn't think it's a dangerous new microbe. "I think it's a shift in the environment that's favoring a particular microbial assemblage that's inadvertently causing this," she is quoted in the *Wired.com* article. Yet she also says that it's unlikely there is much knowledge about the mi-

crobes found in a manure pit.

The foam is commonly found in southern Minnesota, northern Iowa, northwestern Illinois, and southwestern Wisconsin, and at this time seems contained to this geographical region.

### EPA Conducting Flyovers of Large Livestock Lots

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is using airplanes to conduct inspections of large-scale livestock operations in Iowa and Nebraska, reports *Radiolowa.com*. The focus is on facilities that may be violating Clean Water Act regulations, says Josh Svaty, EPA Regional 7 Senior Advisor.



According to Svaty, there are hundreds of CAFOs in impaired watersheds and the flyovers allow the EPA a more cost-effective way to monitor compliance problems rather than driving on hundreds of miles of rural roads.

However, many Nebraska livestock producers and legislators are concerned about the practice and want answers from the EPA. Svaty says the airplanes take still photos of the confinements, avoiding homes, and points out the Nebraska Farm Service Agency has conducted compliance flyovers since the 1980's.

Senator Chuck Grassley has entered the discussion, saying he is likely to also ask for answers from the EPA. Although he says that this type of agricultural air surveillance is nothing new, going back to the 1930's and 1940's, "I sure have a right to know what in the heck they're doing and what they are up to," Grassley was quoted in *Radiolowa.com*.

Michigan's Lynn Henning, an award-winning environmental advocate, often

contracts with private pilots to photograph and document environmental abuses by factory farms.

### EPC Rastetter Ethics Complaint Dismissed

A conflict of interest complaint against Environmental Protection Commission (EPC) member Brent Rastetter was dismissed in a 6-0 vote by the Iowa Ethics and Campaign Disclosure Board, reports *Radiolowa.org*.

Iowa Citizens for Community Improvement (CCI) brought the complaint against Rastetter stating his ownership of a multi-million dollar factory farm construction company posed a conflict of interest in his serving on the EPC, a citizen oversight committee of the Iowa DNR. Rastetter is the owner and president of Quality Ag, Inc.

CCI cited Code 68B.2A in the complaint, which states, "Any person who serves or is employed by the state or a subdivision of the state shall not engage in...outside employment or an activity that is subject to the official control, inspection, review, audit, or enforcement authority of the person, during the performance of the person's duties of office or employment."

Stating that Quality Ag, Inc., is a business whose "practices are directly affected by the environmental rules and regulations under the EPC's judgment," the complaint demanded that Rastetter either resign from the EPC or give up his position at Quality Ag, Inc., and sell his ownership stake in the company.

Megan Tooker, IECDB Executive Director and Legal Counsel said, "I'm of the opinion that this does not constitute a conflict of interest. Iowa has numerous boards of commissions that, by statute or practice, encompass individuals who are members of the fields that they regulate."

CCI claims that Quality Ag has benefited by the EPC's decision to shelve a proposed set of clean water regulations. But Tooker disagreed with that assessment saying, "If a matter specific to one of the commissioners were before the commission, then that commissioner, I believe, should recuse him or herself. But here we're talking about matters that have general application," reported the *Radiolowa.com* article.

CCI member Larry Ginter declared that CCI would continue to fight the Rastetter appointment to the EPC.



## Industry: Eliminating Gestation Crates Will Increase Pork Prices

Several major pork producers are shifting to crate-free confinements for hogs, but the pork industry is warning that the remodeling effort, spurred by consumer concern for animal welfare, will mean higher prices at the grocery store, reports the *Des Moines Register*.

New confinement buildings will need to be built or existing ones renovated, cautions the pork industry, and additional labor and training will be needed to handle sows in open pens. In addition, they predict increased veterinary costs to treat injuries caused by aggressive sows confined together in close conditions.

Smithfield, which has already converted at least 30% of its producers, said it expects its costs to reach about \$300 million reported IndyStar.com. The international company makes about \$13 billion in annual sales. Dennis Treacy, Executive Vice President and Chief Sustainability Officer, says it's too early to determine how much the company will absorb or how much will be passed on to the consumer.

## Industry Survey: Consumers Losing Faith in Big Ag

A study by the Center for Food Integrity (CFI) shows that consumers are increasingly less confident in the industrial food industry reports Grist.org. CFI, founded four years ago, is a coalition of agribusiness companies and industry groups that

include Monsanto, American Farm Bureau, Midwest Dairy Council, and the National Pork Producers.

According to CFI's 2011 Consumer Trust Survey, "[C]onsumers aren't sure today's agriculture still qualifies as farming....We see consumer alienation from agriculture and the food system expressed through concerns about nutrition, food safety, affordability, environmental sustainability, animal welfare, and other issues."

Consumers surveyed in the study said their most important agricultural issues, in order, are food safety, food affordability, food nutrition, reduction of herbicides and pesticides, and humane treatment for livestock. The study found that consumers felt industrial farmers make their profits and productivity a priority over these issues.

The CFI study also asked how consumers felt about "feeding the world." This question is of significance as industrial agriculture justifies its many high-yield practices in order to feed the growing global population.

The results were surprising. While 55% said the US "has a responsibility to provide food for the rest of the world, 95% said "it is more important for the US to teach developing nations how to feed themselves than to export food to them."

The survey also pointed out that most consumers found organic foods healthier, a figure that increased nearly 10% since 2010.

The full study can be viewed at <http://tinyurl.com/cfu9upl>.

## **SURGE** *continued from p. 4*

The resident found out about the CAFOs shortly after a poorly publicized and attended supervisors meeting resulted in the approval of the Master Matrix plans. Nevertheless, she gathered an oppositional group of 20+ individuals to put pressure on the out-of-state owner. The Wright County supervisors looked at appealing the confinements to the EPC, but realized they had no grounds for the appeal since they already approved the Master Matrix.

This group, however, is now trying to get their county supervisors to approve an ordinance that would require the county to alert neighbors within a 2-mile radius of new or expanding CAFOs, inspired by JFAN's policy of alerting neighbors.

**Boone County:** After they posted a call for help on the Practical Farmers of Iowa listserve, JFAN made initial contact with a member of a group that was opposing an expansion that would more than double a 2490-head CAFO to 5200 hogs. Because of strong community opposition – 84 families live near the facility – the county recommended the DNR deny the application even though the Master Matrix passed with enough points. When the DNR approved the facility, the supervisors initially planned to appeal to the EPC. But their denial wasn't considered valid – a county is bound to approve a Master Matrix if it has enough points, and

**SURGE** *continued on p. 8*

### MAIL IN DONATION FORM

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**Donation Amount:** ☐ \$25.00

☐ \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Name** \_\_\_\_\_

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

Checks payable to: Jefferson County Farmers & Neighbors, Inc.

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To make a credit card donation using PayPal, go to [www.jfaniowa.org](http://www.jfaniowa.org)

Click on "What you can do" then click on "Make a Donation"

and follow the simple instructions.

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**SURGE** *continued from p. 7*

counties have no further authority to deny approval of a CAFO. The wean to finish operation is owned by an Alabama businessman.

JFAN had several extensive phone conversations and other contact with one of the group's members. We also sent a large packet of our two booklets for their use. In their last communication, another group member indicated they might like to meet with JFAN at some future time to consider other options.

**Kossuth County:** A neighbor living next to three hog confinements wanted advice on how to work with his neighbors without pursuing litigation. After a discussion with the neighbor, JFAN suggested he work with the CAFO owners to incorporate odor mitigation techniques. JFAN found information on several odor mitigation technologies and provided it to the neighbor. He has attempted to negotiate for odor mitigation with the confinement owners with limited success.

**Greene County:** Prestage Farms of Iowa is building a 4900-head hog confinement near a residence and tourism-related business. The CAFO has overwhelming opposition. Greene County Farmers & Neighbors, Inc. (GFAN) JFAN provided educational support to GFAN. We also shared a Change.org petition with JFAN supporters to stop the facility; over 800 signatures were collected.

Greene County supervisors approved the facility 4-1, and GFAN put pressure on the company to withdraw the CAFO. Prestage repeatedly ignored the group, including walking out of mediation, according to a GFAN spokesperson. GFAN lost the battle, and ground was broken in mid-July.

**Dallas County:** Creative and unrelenting community opposition stopped a CAFO to be built next to many residences and a vibrant Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) farm. JFAN also spoke to a couple of the group's organizers offering educational support to help fight the confinement. (*See their story at right.*)

CCI has been very busy throughout the state helping communities fight factory farms, working with several of the above communities in addition to many others. Here is an overview of a number of their activities, according to CCI's press releases:

**Poweshiek County:** Prestage Farms, a corporate agriculture giant headquartered

in North Carolina, has been attempting to double the size of two 2500-head factory farms, site 244 and site 301, near Grinnell.

The Poweshiek County Board of Supervisors originally took points off the Master Matrix score for both sites due to close proximity to a residential home and two commercial enterprises and manure management issues and voted to recommend that the Iowa DNR deny the construction permits. The DNR overruled the county input and granted provisional construction permits. The supervisors voted 3-0 to appeal the expansions to the Environmental Protection Commission (EPC).

With growing public pressure – hundreds of signature petitions and phone calls, hand-delivered protest letters to the DNR and Prestage offices in Des Moines and Ames, and a packed meeting with top DNR officials attended by over 120 people – Prestage backed down on one of the confinements. On June 15, they announced they were withdrawing plans for site 244.

During the EPC appeal meeting in July, however, the Commission ruled to approve site 301. A CCI representative says that EPC members never fully considered or addressed the Master Matrix points in question.

**Story County:** A proposed 2249-head factory farm in Nevada, Iowa that would be sited near the popular Hickory Grove Park Lake has been put on hold. Over 70 people packed a Story County Conservation Board meeting on June 11 to speak out against a proposed factory farm by Rockstar LLC. The Conservation Board even passed a resolution opposing factory farms near county parks and called on all citizens and levels of government to push for local control over factory farm zoning.

Rockstar LLC hit a hurdle on June 9 when Maschoff Pork of Illinois, the company supplying the hogs, pulled out of the deal. Rockstar's owner withdrew his manure management plan, but said he intends to refile as soon as he finds another hog corporation with which to partner.

**Union County:** Union County Supervisors voted 5-0 to recommend the DNR deny two 5,000 head factory farms linked to Cargill. The CAFOs, which had widespread opposition, would have been built by Quality Ag, Inc., owned by EPC member Brent Rastetter. The DNR will have 30 days to review the denials, construction permit, manure management plan, and Master Matrix and make their final decision. Union County residents are monitoring the DNR's decision.

## CREATIVE ACTION WORKS TO STOP A CAFO

BY FRANCIS THICKE

A group of neighbors in Dallas County, Iowa were recently successful with an unusual strategy that appealed to the CAFO developer's humanity.

In early May, an application to build a 5,000-hog CAFO was submitted to the DNR for a location that was near a 100-member Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) farm and a small dairy that had an on-farm store. Neighbors and customers of the CSA and dairy made an appeal directly to the CAFO applicant using a two-pronged approach.

First, opponents of the CAFO held an informational picket outside of the Clean Works Auto Wash in Perry, owned by the CAFO developer, informing customers that their quarters were going to fund his CAFO building. Passing cars gave many honks and thumbs-up of support for the picketers.

Then on Mother's Day, the mothers and grandmothers in the neighborhood near the CAFO site all signed a card sent to the CAFO developer's wife, imploring her to think of the children in the neighborhood and their health and well-being.

Two days later — on the day of the public hearing, when the county board of supervisors was almost certain to approve the CAFO based on the Master Matrix score — the CAFO developer suddenly abandoned his CAFO plan, stating in a letter, "Our family has made the decision to withdraw our application to build a hog confinement building in Dallas County...After taking into account and addressing the concerns from immediate neighbors...."

As encouraging as it is to see a CAFO cancelled because the developer listened to concerns of his neighbors, not all CAFO developers are likely to be as accommodating, particularly corporate entities that have built other CAFOs and have a history of disregarding neighbors' concerns.

The effectiveness of this strategy to stop a CAFO was summed up by Rick Hartmann, the CSA farmer: "We were all rather small as individuals, but became a mountain standing on each others' shoulders. One too big for one developer."

*Francis Thicke and his wife, Susan Noll, are owners and operators of an organic grass-based dairy farm near Fairfield. Dr. Thicke has also served as the National Program Leader for soil science for the USDA Extension Service.*