

Jefferson County Farmers and Neighbors, Inc. (JFAN)
Jefferson County Good Neighbor Guidelines
August 2006

Guideline Introduction

Iowa has a long and strong agricultural tradition, with crop and livestock farming representing an important and integral part of the Iowa economy and its way of life. Unfortunately, the growth of modern, industrialized agriculture can carry with it undesirable side effects that impinge on the quality of life of Iowa residents. JFAN is a community coalition of rural and town residents and traditional family farmers. Our common goal is to protect the quality of life for all current and future residents of Jefferson County (the County) through the promotion of sound livestock practices that ensure a clean environment, health to its residents and the preservation of local property values.

Recently, local livestock farmers approached JFAN and requested guidelines for the building of acceptable livestock confinements within the County. Although JFAN is a strong supporter of sustainable livestock farming methods and desires and encourages all future livestock operations to embrace these methods, from a practical perspective these “Good Neighbor Guidelines” have been developed in response to these requests. It is JFAN’s desire that they be adopted by anyone intending to build new confined livestock operations within the County, whether such confinements are of the SAFO (small animal feeding operation) or of the CAFO (confined animal feeding operation) classification.

These guidelines do not override, but are meant to augment all Department of Natural Resources (DNR) rules and regulations. Additionally, while we believe the Master Matrix that has been adopted by the County falls short of appropriate guidelines, particularly in the way it is scored, we do support the spirit of the Master Matrix and believe its guidelines should apply to all confinement operations, regardless of size. Finally, the Iowa Pork Producers Association has developed its own “Best Management Practices”, which we also strongly support and include, verbatim, in the best management practices section of these guidelines.

JFAN is not a regulatory body and cannot commit for the Jefferson County community as a whole. Ultimately, Iowa may enact strong local control laws, legislation that JFAN has supported. In the interim, it is JFAN’s belief that these guidelines, if adopted by the local livestock community, will result in substantially improved communications between livestock operators and residents, a safer and more enjoyable environment to live in for everyone, and in areas where a CAFO/SAFO is acceptable for the County and its residents, a path to construction and operation that is smoother and less costly for the operator/owner.

Guideline Points

1. Neighbor Notification and Approval.
 - a. Obtain approval of neighbors within one mile prior to construction – It is the neighbors closest to a CAFO/SAFO that are most directly impacted and most likely to object to an operation. Prior to construction, establish who the neighbors are within a one mile radius of the confinement and notify them of site plans and any impact (odor, fan noise, air quality, etc.) the facility may have on surrounding properties. Obtain approval from 100% of these neighbors. (Article 36 of the Master Matrix)

2. Location and Concentration of CAFO/SAFO.
 - a. Build in your own backyard - Taking into account each of the guidelines listed in this section, the Operator should attempt to build in his or her own backyard first. Manure from the CAFO/SAFO should also be spread in his or her surrounding fields first.
 - b. Site in low density areas - Siting should be aimed at locations in lowest population density areas of the County, as this will obviously minimize the impact of the operation on County residents.
 - c. Limit the size of the operation - Operator should seek to limit the operation in a given area to a maximum of 1,200 hogs. One of JFAN's goals is that Jefferson County remains free of the large scale hog confinements that have greatly impacted the quality of life for rural Iowans in neighboring counties.
 - d. Ensure reasonable levels of hog concentration in an area- In general, operator's should limit CAFO/SAFO construction so as to ensure that the concentration of hogs does not exceed 1,200 head per square mile. Rural neighbors are much more likely to accept a CAFO/SAFO if they have confidence that more will not follow on later. There is obviously a significant difference between one 1,200 head facility in a given area and ten such facilities.
 - e. Setbacks from towns and institutions.
 - i. Towns - Limit construction sites to areas at least three miles beyond the boundaries of any incorporated towns.
 - ii. Public institutions – Limit construction to no closer than two miles from any public use buildings or areas (e.g. recreational facilities, hospitals, schools, churches, etc.) and any concentrated residential or commercial areas that lie outside an incorporated town.
 - f. Setbacks from water.
 - i. Maintain a minimum setback of 1,250 feet from any drainage way, water source, creek, stream, river, lake, well (abandoned or in use), reservoir or other body of water (with the exception of ponds located on the operators own property).
 - g. Do not locate site on highly eroded land or land that has the potential for high erosion.

3. Handling of Manure and its Application.
 - a. Applicators should be certified according to DNR specification. This should apply for any size operation.
 - b. To minimize odor and potential runoff problems, “knife in” all applications. Operators should avoid the use of sprinklers in any applications.
 - c. Manure application setbacks.
 - i. Residential setbacks – Obtain approval of neighbor/resident regarding applications that are less than 1,250 feet from a residence.
 - ii. Waterway setbacks – In addition to DNR guidelines, Operator shall use due care and best practices such that any runoff will not negatively impact waterways.
 - d. Notify neighbors at least three weeks prior to application. This will allow for neighbors to plan their outdoor activities accordingly (picnics, barbeques, etc.).
 - e. Manure Spills – Clean up spills immediately on your property and others, especially public right of ways.

4. Best Management Practices - **as written and published by Eldon McAfee, Iowa Pork Producers Association legal council, in the Iowa Pork Association magazine.**
 - a. Make every attempt to get to know neighbors. Realistically assess the situation with neighbors before building or expanding an operation.
 - b. Listen to and sincerely respond to neighbor concerns -- even if they seem unfounded or beyond the producer's control at the time. Consider all reasonable suggestions to address the concerns.
 - c. Meet with concerned neighbors to explain your operation. Participate in mediation if requested by neighbors. Never give up trying to resolve the situation.
 - d. Be aware of and comply with -- or better yet exceed -- all legal requirements for the operation. Design and construct the operation to minimize its impact on neighbors. This includes locating as far from neighbors and public areas as possible, designing sites that are not visible to neighbors, and utilizing the latest design technology to minimize odor (e.g., tree shelter belts and biofilters). Work with advisors, such as a manure management specialist, attorney or entomologist, to design and site your operation to minimize impact on neighbors.
 - e. Stay current on new technologies and management practices to minimize odor, flies, etc. Attend meetings and seminars on these topics.

- f. Use best management practices, including keeping facilities as clean as possible, making sure manure storage structures are being operated according to current industry standards, and using products that reduce odor and flies in buildings and manure storage.
- g. Direct inject or incorporate manure within a short period of time following application. If manure must be applied and soil conditions will not allow injection or incorporation, contact neighbors beforehand and let them know your dilemma and why you can't inject or incorporate this time.
- h. Avoid applying manure near neighbors, if possible. Notify neighbors prior to applying manure and offer to postpone application if neighbors have special activities planned.
- i. Apply manure when wind, temperature and other weather conditions are less likely to cause odor to reach neighbors.
- j. Apply manure as few times as possible throughout the year. This is a major advantage for newer confinement operations that have enough storage capacity to allow manure to be applied once each year.
- k. Avoid manure on roads and, as much as possible, avoid leaving mud, etc. on roads. If neighbors live on gravel roads, offer to pay for application of products to keep dust down.
- l. If more land is needed for manure application, consider offering the manure to neighboring farmers.
- m. Although many producers are not interested in owning residential property, consider purchasing acreages that are for sale near your operation. The residence can either be rented out or re-sold with a deed restriction establishing a nuisance easement or covenant.
- n. Require all manure applicators, input suppliers, livestock haulers, etc. to follow good neighbor practices. Most are more than willing to pay careful attention to their activities if they know of your neighbor's individual concerns. Inform employees about good neighbor practices and make sure they follow them.