

Phase Out Factory Farm CAFOs and Reform Our Animal Farm System

Tell your U.S. Senators and Representatives to co-sponsor and pass the Farm System Reform Act (FSRA).

The Farm System Reform Act would:

- Place an immediate moratorium on new and expanding large factory farm CAFOs (Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations), and phase out by 2040 the largest CAFOs
- Hold corporations, like Tyson, responsible for pollution and other harm caused by CAFOs
- Provide financial assistance to farmers who want to transition out of operating a CAFO and into pasture-raised livestock or organic crop production
- Strengthen the Packers and Stockyards Act to protect family farmers and ranchers, including:
 - Prohibit the use of unfair tournament or ranking systems for paying contract growers
 - Protect livestock and poultry farmers from corporate retaliation
 - Create market transparency and protect farmers and ranchers from predatory purchasing practices
- Restore mandatory country-of-origin labeling requirements for beef and pork and expand to dairy products
- Prohibit the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) from labeling foreign imported meat products as "Product of USA"

Animals raised in factory farm CAFOs are subjected to unnatural and cruel living conditions and practices. In most cases, animals such as cows, pigs and chickens are packed so tightly that they have no room to move. In dairy CAFOs, cows are not given enough space to lie down. In pig CAFOs, pregnant sows are confined for their entire lives in gestation cages with no room to turn around. These animals experience unnecessary pain and suffering from living in their own excrement, in horrid and filthy conditions.[1][2][3]

CAFOs are associated with a number of significant human health concerns. Experts agree that overuse of medically important antibiotics in animal factory farms is leading to antibiotic-resistant bacteria, endangering public health.[4]

CAFOs are contributing to increased instances of food-borne illness. The 2019 contamination of romaine lettuce implicated in three outbreaks of E. coli O157:H7

causing 188 people to fall ill is linked to fecal matter runoff from factory farm cattle feedlots.[5]

CAFOs have increased transfer of infectious agents from animals to humans and are hotbeds for a generation of novel viruses. The 2009 H1N1 swine flu pandemic that caused nearly 300,000 deaths worldwide began in North American pig CAFOs.[6]

Public health experts warn that industrial factory farm CAFOs are the breeding ground for future pandemics. Academics and epidemiologists recognize the link between the emergence of highly pathogenic avian influenza viruses and increasingly intensive poultry farming. Wild birds are routinely blamed by governments and the industrial agriculture industry for spreading avian flu along migratory routes, but evidence is mounting that intensive farms are potential "mixing pots" for new, deadly viruses. "Blaming migratory waterfowl ... is clearly no longer a tenable position," says Rob Wallace, an American virologist who argues that the new strains of flu emerging are adapting to industrial poultry production. "Influenza's infiltration into industrial livestock and poultry is so complete that these farms now act as their own reservoirs [of disease]," he says. "They are their own source." Marius Gilbert, an epidemiologist at the Université Libre de Bruxelles in Belgium, and others have shown how bird flu is linked to the rapid intensification of poultry farming, which is now making bird flu viruses more dangerous.[7][8]

CAFOs are linked to the ill health of nearby residents and "are directly associated with the social and economic decline of rural communities," according to the American Public Health Association. Additionally, CAFOs are responsible for massive air, water and environmental pollution that extends well beyond the areas where the CAFOs are sited. CAFOs are not sustainable.[9][10][11][12]

A 2019 study published in the journal Proceedings of the National Academy of the Sciences (PNAS) showed that conventional animal factory farms cost the economy more in health and environmental damage than they contribute to the economy.[13] Another 2021 study published in PNAS found that animal factory farm pollution is responsible for over 17,900 premature deaths in the U.S.[14]

2019 polling from the Johns Hopkins Center for a Livable Future and Greenberg Quinlan Rosner Research shows overwhelming and bipartisan support for policy protections from the dangers posed by CAFOs. A majority of Americans want a moratorium and eventual phasing out of CAFOs.[15]

There are fairer and more humane ways to produce America's meat, dairy and eggs

that do not harm farmers, communities and the environment. The Farm System Reform Act would help America transition to a healthier food system.

References:

1. What Life Is Like for America's 10 Million Dairy Cows [LINK](#)
2. The FBI's Hunt for Two Missing Piglets Reveals the Federal Cover-Up of Barbaric Factory Farms [LINK](#)
3. Rescue at Oakland Slaughterhouse Shows New, Potent Tactics of Growing Animal Rights Movement [LINK](#)
4. How Drug-Resistant Bacteria Travel from the Farm to Your Table [LINK](#)
5. Fecal material from nearby feedlots likely cause of romaine outbreaks [LINK](#)
6. Swine Flu Ancestor Born on U.S. Factory Farms [LINK](#)
7. Factory farms of disease: how industrial chicken production is breeding the next pandemic [LINK](#)
8. Bird flu spreads in Europe and Asia [LINK](#)
9. Public Health Experts Support a Ban on CAFOs. New Polling Suggests the Public Does, Too [LINK](#)
10. 'What they put on the fields contaminates our water': Iowa's pollution problem [LINK](#)
11. Inside the Rural Resistance to CAFOs [LINK](#)
12. A Texas community chokes on fecal dust from cattle feedlots [LINK](#)
13. Animal Agriculture Costs More In Health Damage Than It Contributes To The Economy [LINK](#)
14. Air pollution from farms leads to 17,900 U.S. deaths per year, study finds [LINK](#)
15. Johns Hopkins CAFO Moratorium Poll Results 2019 [LINK](#)