

Confined Animal Feeding Operations Facts

- CAFOs (Confined Animal Feeding Operations) are large-scale animal feeding operations that have significant negative environmental and public health consequences.
- Missouri has 106,000 farm operations, about 500 of these are Class I CAFOs with 1,000 to 7,000 “animal units”.
- Current state standards allow up to 17,499 hogs within 2000 feet of a residence. It allows an unlimited number of animals to be located 3,000 feet from a residence.
- According to an EPA study, a CAFO with 4,000 hogs can generate as much waste as a city of 16,000 people. A Class 1A CAFO (17,500 hogs and above) can generate as much waste as the city of St. Louis.
- In the last 15 years, hog numbers in Missouri have stayed the same (2,700,000), while the number of hog farmers has decreased 85% from 15,000 to 2,200. In the same time period, the price of pork has increased from \$1.71 per pound to \$2.81 per pound, but the hog producers’ share of that money has decreased from 49 cents to 30 cents.
- Increased numbers of CAFOs in an area often are associated with declines in local economic and social indicators (e.g. business purchases, infrastructure, property values, population, social cohesion), which undermine the socioeconomic and social foundations of community health.

Our elected representatives should be taking steps to protect the property rights of the majority of family farmers and rural landowners, not just the small number of CAFO operators.

Local Control

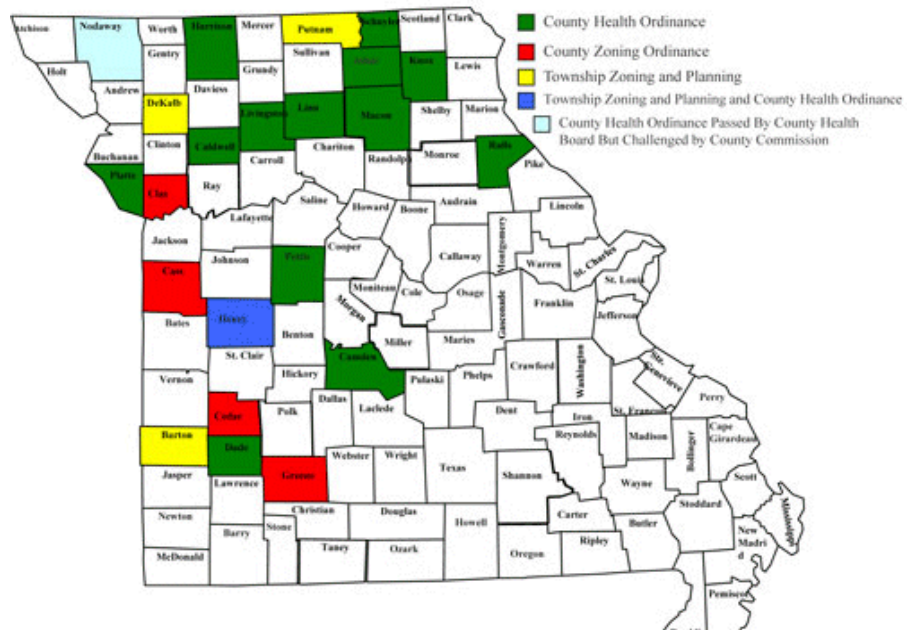
Missouri communities have responded to the state’s inadequate CAFO regulations and enforcement by passing their own health ordinances through county government or local health boards that require commonsense measures like increased setbacks for CAFOs near residences and schools. For the past four years, the CAFO industry has sought a state law that would void these local laws. For the past four years, Missouri citizens have defeated these attempts and defended our right to local control.

Maintain Local Control

Support: Bills that strengthen the rights of county commissioners and health boards.

Oppose: ANY bill that jeopardizes or compromises local control.

Oppose: Tax incentives for CAFOs, and laws that would limit our water quality standards to “no stricter than federal.”



Problems with CAFOS

- Waste: Waste from CAFOs contains manure and urine, which are sources for phosphorus and nitrates from ammonia, which can reduce oxygen in surface waters, encourage the growth of harmful algal blooms, and contaminate drinking water sources. CAFO wastes also may contain: antibiotics; pathogens such as viruses, parasites, and bacteria; pesticides and hormones; solids; and trace elements, such as arsenic.
- Waste-disposal: While a city of 16,000 people would be required to treat its waste, CAFOs are not. Instead, waste from hog operations is collected in indoor pits or outdoor “lagoons” and then spread over the land. Poultry operations remove the waste from their barns periodically and also land apply it. CAFO operators apply waste to area fields often resulting in the soil becoming saturated. Rainfall causes these chemicals to leech out of the soil and to seep into the water table on to surrounding water sources.
- Health issues & Food Safety: The US Centers for Disease Control, University of Iowa, and Iowa State agree that CAFO air emissions constitute a hazard to public health and worker health, finding increased nausea, headaches, brain damage, vomiting or diarrhea and even life-threatening pulmonary edema. In addition to the gases hydrogen sulfide (a neurotoxin) and ammonia (a respiratory irritant), airborne manure particles from CAFOs have been shown to carry bacteria. Industrial livestock production and processing undermines food safety. In 2008, the USDA estimates there were 154,497,491 lbs of meat recalls.
- Antibiotic Overuse: The pervasive use of antibiotics has led to the emergence of a host of infectious agents that resist most of our antibiotics. One such bug, known as MRSA (methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus) is a resistant staph bacteria that is a growing public health threat. In a 2006 study of 26 states by Andrew Ramsey, MPH, of the University of Massachusetts School of Public Health, **Missouri had the highest rates for both MRSA C. diff.** infections (Clostridium difficile, another antibiotic-resistant bacteria).
- Odor: Residents in areas surrounding CAFOs report nuisances, such as odor and flies. The enjoyment of outdoor activities is seriously curtailed when the stench of CAFO wastes dominates the air. While there are few meaningful regulations on odors in Missouri, some municipalities (notably, Carthage), are exploring odor ordinances. Contrary to industry claims, the majority of rural residents negatively impacted by CAFOs are life-long residents, often multi-generational farmers themselves, not newcomers from ‘the city’.
- Property values: A study by the University of Missouri found that property values near CAFOs decreased from 6.6% to 88% depending on property attributes and distance from the CAFO.
- Jobs: A Missouri study found that corporate hog contract operations create a net loss of employment. While creating 9 jobs for every 12,000 hogs produced, corporate contract operations displace 28 jobs because corporate owners circulate their profits outside rural communities. When compared to corporate contract hog operations, family farms come out ahead. Family farms create 10% more permanent jobs because family farmers are more likely to circulate money within the community instead of profits accruing elsewhere.

Factory Farming & Sustainable Agriculture

Clean water and clean air = clean food.

Sustainable practices - The Future of Agriculture in Missouri

- Independent family farmers with a commitment to the land, their neighbors, and communities.
- Independent family farmers who own their own livestock and engage in best practices, such as crop diversity, soil conservation, integrated pest management, and pasture-raised, free-range livestock.
- Local food networks that support farms, and business activity such as farmers’ markets, restaurants, groceries and stores that feature local products.
- Sustainable agriculture supports rural economies and rural communities by providing employment for farm workers, a strong tax base, and income for area businesses.
- Provide safe, healthy, and delicious food.