

Animal unit caps are reasonable, vital

As we read your story about the dairy census numbers and animal unit caps, we wondered what your objective might be. The data you cited as fact simply don't suggest that an animal unit cap serves no useful purpose.

We've researched and we're not seeing any data backing up Winona County Commissioner Steve Jacob's claim that "cows are leaving Winona County as dairy farmers move to neighboring counties that don't impede growth." Also, the suggestion that smaller dairies are "less likely to use cover crops" is not supported by data.

The fact is, federal and state farming policies have driven and continue to drive smaller and mid-sized dairies out of business throughout the nation. In 1992, Minnesota had about 14,000 dairy farms. Now there are slightly less than 4,000.

When we have fair and competitive markets in place, dairies of any size which are managed well and keep total debt low, are able to run profitably. There is no correlation between size and profitability. Larger animal numbers simply mean greater gross

dollars, not automatic profits. "Economies of scale" can act as a myth that hides how dairy processors bias benefits for the biggest players through farm policies that are in drastic need of overhaul.

For over 25 years, our family has made our living operating our 175-cow grazing dairy farm in Fillmore County. It's situated over the same sensitive karst geology that is present throughout Winona County. All along, we have worked with our farming community to run a profitable dairy enterprise while protecting the land, our water, environment and community. We have a deep understanding of the challenges, realities and fundamental limits involved when you're working to maintain water quality and healthy soil while farming in this region and keeping your farm business up and running.

An animal unit cap is a reasonable and vital limit for balance at all levels within any region, and especially in a region with surface and ground water as sensitive as ours.

Vance and Bonnie Haugen, CANTON, MINN.

African swine fever overwhelms Asia, millions of pigs are culled

Vietnam has been the hardest hit, with 2.6M animals lost, as outbreaks spread elsewhere.

By HAU DINH and SAM MCNEIL
Associated Press

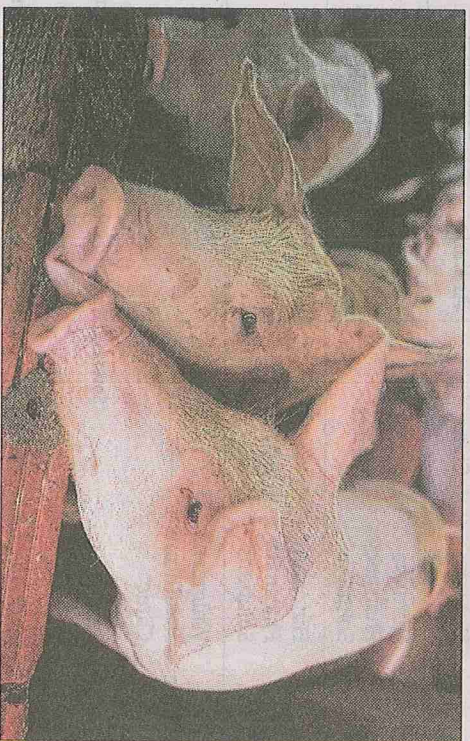
HANOI, VIETNAM - Millions of pigs have been culled in China and Vietnam as a U.N. food agency urges Asian governments to make containing virulent African swine fever their top priority.

With an announcement by the U.N. Food and Agricultural Organization that infections have spread to Laos, some experts are saying it is the largest animal-disease outbreak in history.

The FAO said in a report late Thursday that more than 3.7 million pigs in the region had been culled since the outbreak began in China last August. Vietnam has been the hardest hit, culling at least 2.6 million pigs followed by China, which reported more than 1.1 million. All the figures were provided to the FAO by governments of countries affected by the epidemic. Smaller outbreaks have been reported in Hong Kong, Taiwan, North Korea, Cambodia and Mongolia after cases were first reported in China's northeast in August.

African swine fever is harmless to people but fatal and highly contagious for pigs, with no known cure.

With pork supplies dwindling as leading producer China and hard-hit Vietnam destroy huge numbers



HIEU DINH - Associated Press

Vietnam reported in May that 1.2 million pigs, or about 5% of its total 30 million, an industry worth \$18 billion, had died or been destroyed. The FAO now says that number has more than doubled to 2.6 million.

of hogs and tighten controls on shipments, prices have soared by up to 40% globally and caused shortages in other markets.

"This is the largest animal-disease outbreak in history," said Dirk Pfieffer, a veterinary epidemiologist at the City University of Hong Kong. "We've never had anything like it."

In South Korea, where diets rely on pork, there is concern an outbreak could hurt an industry with 6,300 farms raising more than 11 million pigs.

"Animal-disease containment in its broadest sense should be prioritized within the highest levels of governments," the FAO said, warning,

"Outbreak control strategies must be in place."

China has reported 139 outbreaks in all but two of its 34 provinces.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture forecasts its total hog herd will shrink by 18% this year to 350 million animals, the lowest since the 1980s. This year's Chinese pork output might fall by up to 35%, according to Rabobank, a Dutch bank.

Vietnam reported in mid-May that 1.2 million pigs, or about 5% of its total 30 million, an industry worth \$18 billion, had died or been destroyed. The FAO said Thursday that number had more than doubled to 2.6 million. Mil-

tary and police were mobilized to help contain the outbreak, officials said.

Rabobank expects Vietnamese pork production to fall 10% this year from 2018.

The mass culling in Vietnam could sink many farmers deeper into poverty, said Wantanee Kalpravidh, a regional coordinator of the FAO's Emergency Center for Transboundary Animal Disease.

Last month, Prime Minister Nguyen Xuan Phuc urged authorities to prevent the disease, found in 58 of 63 provinces, from escalating into an epidemic.

In My Duc, a suburb of Hanoi, disinfecting lime powder has been scattered around empty pig farms and checkpoints were set up to control shipments.

"We have to prevent and fight this disease like fighting an enemy," Phuc told Cabinet officials.

Farmer Nguyen Van Hoa lamented that only three pigs had died from the fever but authorities culled 40 of his pigs. They were among 14,000 hogs buried in My Duc district in the past month. About 2.4 million Vietnamese households engage in small-scale pig farming.

In Cambodia, more than 2,400 pigs have died or were culled since April in an eastern province bordering Vietnam, the FAO said.

Sem Oun, a 58-year-old farmer and father of two in Ta Prum, a village near the capital Phnom Penh, frets that the illness could spread

from Vietnam.

"I don't have any other job and my income that provides for my entire family relies solely on these pigs. If they die because of swine flu then everybody in the family will die too," he said.

Hong Kong authorities have killed 10,700 pigs in two outbreaks, including one triggered by an animal imported from the mainland that was found to be infected. Two dead pigs infected with a virus similar to those in mainland China were found in Taiwan, the FAO said.

Epidemic fighting efforts have gotten entangled in regional geopolitics.

North Korea scaled back cooperation with South Korea after the collapse of a February summit between North Korean leader Kim Jong Un and President Donald Trump, hampering joint work on stemming the spread of the disease following an outbreak near North Korea's border with China.

South Korea's agricultural ministry said that blood tests of pigs from some 340 farms near the border with the North were negative. Fences and traps have been installed near farms to protect hogs from being infected by wild boars that roam the inter-Korean border.

The North's official Rodong Sinmun newspaper said quarantine efforts were focused on disinfecting farms and transport vehicles, restricting visitors, and banning the distribution of food products containing pork.

OPINION

DODGE COUNTY INDEPENDENT

YOUR VIEW

No surprise to find a cougar in factory farm country

It's no surprise that a cougar was spotted recently near Dodge Center. This isn't the first time that a cougar has been sighted in the area; one was observed a few months ago near our family farm in Westfield Township.

Our farm is surrounded by 11 swine factory farms in a three-mile radius. Dead animals from area factory farms are left to rot in open composting sheds, rather than using a rendering service. Area corporate factory farms are ha-

vens for predators such as cougars that are searching for an easy meal, placing rural communities, children and pets at risk.

When will local citizens understand the dangers associated with corporate factory farms and challenge the foolishness of public officials who approve these facilities?

Brad Trom
Blooming Prairie

Opinion

A2

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 19, 2019

STEELE COUNTY TIMES

YOUR VIEW

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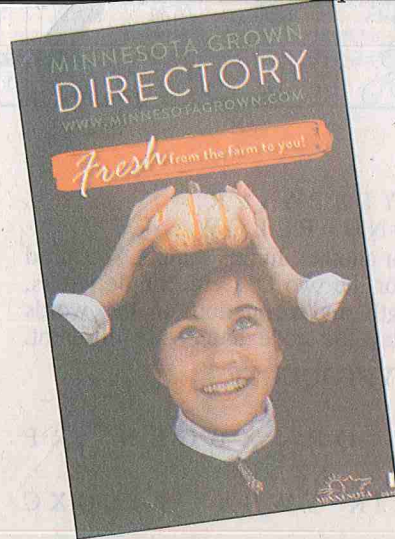
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CSA shares are available

ST. PAUL — Shares in Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) farms are still available, the Minnesota Department of Agriculture is reminding consumers.

CSA farms sell subscriptions or memberships to individuals or families who pay up front to receive a share of produce, generally once per week for 14-20 weeks. Typically a full share is enough to feed four vegetable-loving adults. Many farms will offer full, half and even mini-shares. Some include seasonal recipes, e-newsletters, and on-the-farm events like pumpkin picking in the cost.

Consumers can find a local CSA farm in the Minnesota Grown Directory. It includes information about 87 CSA farms with 142 drop sites around the state. Find the directory at www.minnesotagrown.com or order a free copy of the printed directory by calling 1-800-657-3878 or by going online to www.minnesotagrown.com/order.

www.agadvantageinc.com

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Insecto is registered by the EPA #48598-1 for Organic Production as well as common use. It has also won the prestigious honor of being recognized by Organic Materials Review Institute (OMRI).

No application license is required to buy or use Insecto, as it kills insects by a purely physical means rather than through the use of harmful chemicals. Its active ingredient is a refined, Food Grade, Saltwater Diatomaceous Earth (DE), which simply is the natural skeletal remains of plankton (more effective than its freshwater cousin) with several food proteins added as baits. Insects crawl through and also eat the INSECTO which kills them by dehydration. DE is allowed in human and animal food products up to 2% of weight, a significantly higher saturation rate than is used in our product. Insecto is registered by the EPA for use in the control of all the major groups of grain insects, including moths, weevils and beetles, and on all of the major stored grains: wheat, corn and rice, etc. Insecto is also highly effective in controlling chicken house infestations.

Application is easy, too! Simply follow the instructions on the bag. Using Insecto ensures protection of your crop investment for less than 1 cent per bushel, and best of all: **It won't harm your children, pets or the environment.** Increased long-term productivity over traditional chemical pesticides makes Insecto an attractive, cost-effective alternative for all your pest control needs.

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NATURAL INSECTO PRODUCTS, INC. toll-free at 800-332-2002
or visit our web site at www.insecto.com. We look forward
to helping you maximize your production and your profit margin!

Midwest

Tyson sues agency over hog inspections

Associated Press

SIOUX CITY, Iowa — Arkansas-based meat processor Tyson Foods is suing a federal agency for \$2.4 million, saying it had to destroy 8,000 carcasses because a federal meat inspector lied about checking hogs at a plant in Iowa.

Yolanda Thompson, who works for the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food Safety Inspection Service, signed certificates suggesting she had checked slaughtered hogs at the Storm Lake plant in March 2018, Tyson said. The company noted that video footage indicated Thompson never entered the plant and actually approved the inspections while sitting in her automobile.

Tyson filed suit on May 14 in the U.S. District Court in Sioux City alleging the USDA and Food Safety Inspection Service knew of Thompson's inadequate inspection practices and physical difficulties walking around the plant, the Sioux City Journal reported.

"The United States should have recognized Thompson's unfitness to perform the

inspections that were necessary for the protection of Tyson's property. However, the United States failed to so recognize, resulting in the destruction of approximately 8,000 hog carcasses, causing injury to Tyson," the company said in the lawsuit.

Inspectors are mandated to visually examine all hogs slaughtered at the plant to decide whether they have health conditions that could make them unsuitable for human consumption.

On March 26, 2018, Tyson killed about 4,622 hogs at the Storm Lake plant, and Thompson gave signed inspection cards to plant supervisors. The lawsuit states that plant administrators were told by Food Safety staffers the next day that Thompson had not executed the inspections. On March 30, 2018, the USDA declared that it was not feasible to determine whether the hogs that had not been checked were subject to any health conditions that would have led to disapproval of the carcasses.

Tyson had no choice but to destroy about 8,000 carcasses, which included the inspected

Midwest

MIDWEST BRIEFS

Field days highlight organic farming practices

SPRING VALLEY, Wis. — The Midwest Organic and Sustainable Education Service offers a dozen field days this summer, including one in southern Minnesota, to show farmers how organic production works.

Jim Riddle and Joyce Ford, MOSES Organic Farmers of the Year and owners of Blue Fruit Farm in Winona County, will showcase how they grow unusual fruits, overhead netting, native plants, and mechanical weed control for orchards. The field day will be from 10:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Aug. 21. Lunch will be provided.

The other field days are being held in Wisconsin, Iowa, South Dakota and Illinois. For more information about them or to register, go to mosesorganic.org/organic-field-days or call the Organic Answer Line at 888-90-MOSES.

Business

FOCUS ON AG

Funds help cover some organic costs

From staff reports

WASHINGTON — USDA's Farm Service Agency has funds available for organic producers and handlers to help with the cost of receiving and maintaining organic certification.

Applications in the Organic Certification Cost Share Program are due Oct. 31.

"Producers can visit their local FSA county offices to apply for up to 75 percent of the cost of organic certification," said FSA Administrator Richard Fordyce.

OCCSP received continued support through the 2018 Farm Bill. It provides cost-share assistance to producers and handlers of agricultural products for the costs of obtaining or maintaining organic certification in the USDA's National Organic Program.

Eligible certified producers and handlers who paid organic certification fees to a USDA-accredited certifying agent.

Eligible expenses for cost-share reimbursement include application fees, inspection costs, fees related to equivalency agreement and arrangement requirements, travel expenses for inspectors, user fees, sales assessments and postage.

Certified producers and handlers are eligible to receive reimbursement for up to 75 percent of certification costs each year, up to a maximum of \$750 per certification scope, including crops, livestock, wild crops, handling and state organic program fees.

For more information, contact your FSA county office.

What would ASF look like if it hit the U.S.?

Editor's note: The following was written by Russ Daly, South Dakota State University Extension veterinarian, for the university's website April 29.

The incursion and expansion of African swine fever into China has raised concerns among producers and regulatory officials about the threat the disease may pose to the U.S. swine industry.

It's easy to consider a pig disease on the other side of the world to be a very distant problem. However, as the 2013 entry of porcine epidemic diarrhea virus into the U.S. illustrated, global trade and movement of equipment, animal products and feed ingredients means that stable viruses can move around the world more efficiently than ever.

Animal health and producer groups across the industry are monitoring the ASF situation and planning how to prevent its entry into the U.S. If that would ever occur, rapidly identifying the disease is the critical first step in preventing a single case from starting a nationwide outbreak.

Hog producers will be the first

to notice ASF if it ever reaches the U.S. Therefore, a question producers should consider is, "What would ASF look like if it were to hit the U.S.?"

Signs in pigs

In a large operation, a first clue pointing toward ASF is that, unlike many other pig viruses, ASF causes illness in all age groups of pigs. The signs of illness will depend upon what strain of ASF gets to our shores. The highly virulent strains represent the worst-case scenario: sudden death losses approaching 100%.

If signs due to one of these virulent ASF strains are noticed, they might resemble a nasty case of PRRS. Pigs develop fever, reddened skin in their extremities (ears, tail, lower chest and belly), and begin to huddle and pile to regulate their body temperature. Pigs would be listless, go off feed and begin to "thump" (breathe with difficulty). There may be some vomiting and diarrhea. These signs could also be seen with systemic infections like salmonellosis or erysipelas.

If the ASF strain that comes in is of lesser virulence, then the signs won't be as intense. Pigs would develop fever, be-

Should the worst case happen, though, a quick response — beginning with a call to a veterinarian — when "something doesn't look right" will be the best way to limit the potential damage.

come listless and go off their feed. Mortality is lower but still might hit 30-70%. The survivors will develop chronic infections, with weight loss, swollen joints, breathing problems and spots of skin infection — which could mimic erysipelas or forms of circovirus infection.

Since ASF could look like other, more routine diseases, sorting out a diagnosis is critical. Swine producers should call their veterinarian when any unusual illnesses or death losses become apparent. At this time, veterinary diagnostic labs are not performing routine ASF diagnostics (although the capability is there).

Any potential foreign animal disease such as this is investigated by state and federal regulatory vets, who send the appropriate samples to national labs for diagnosis.

Transmissibility

The highly contagious ASF virus mostly moves between pigs through the nose and mouth. It infects the tonsils in the back of the throat and spreads from there through the bloodstream to the whole body (explaining why signs are more general than specific to an organ system).

Since live pigs aren't imported into the U.S. from ASF countries, the virus would most likely enter a farm through contaminated feed ingredients, then spread easily between hogs through direct contact.

In other countries, waste scraps of pork products fed to pigs, contact with wild pig sources of the disease, and bites from ticks are significant transmission routes. Modern confinement pork production and the lack of the tick vector in this part of the

country minimizes the importance of these forms of spread.

Other issues

What makes the ASF virus quite problematic is, unlike some of the swine viruses we're more accustomed to, it has the ability to survive long periods outside the pig. It easily survives 30 days in pig environments, and for three to six months in uncooked or undercooked pork.

It's especially resistant to freezing and is not affected by many of the usual disinfectants used in pork production. Should an outbreak occur, much attention will need to be paid to decontaminating the pig's housing and surroundings afterward.

Of most concern is that there is no vaccine or treatment for ASF. Pigs on infected farms must be destroyed, and strict movement and quarantine actions will be taken.

Clearly, preventing the incursion of ASF is of utmost importance to U.S. pork producers. Should the worst case happen, though, a quick response — beginning with a call to a veterinarian — when "something doesn't look right" will be the best way to limit the potential damage.

Midwest

MIDWEST BRIEFS

Guide for farmers on solar, wind energy installations available

ST. PAUL — The Minnesota Farmers Union and Farmers' Legal Action Group have created a Farmers' Guide to Solar and Wind Energy, a resource for farmers considering large-scale solar and wind installations on their land.

The guide can help explain the legal provisions in contracts and materials farmers may receive from developers.

The 32-page guide is intended as a starting point for farmers who are considering large-scale solar or wind projects. The guide is available online and there is a PDF available for printing.

The guide is available at www.mfu.org/farmers-guide-to-solar-and-wind.

Midwest

OCT 12.

Sanders calls for breaking up big ag monopolies

BY ALEXANDRA JAFFE
Associated Press

OSAGE, Iowa — Democratic presidential candidate Bernie Sanders on Sunday proposed a sweeping agriculture and rural investment plan to break up big agriculture monopolies and shift farm subsidies toward small family farmers.

"I think a farmer that produces the food we eat may be almost as important as some crook on Wall Street who destroys the economy," Sanders said during a campaign event in Osage, a town of fewer than 4,000 people. "Those of us who come from rural America have nothing to be ashamed about, and the time is long overdue for us to stand up and fight for our way of life."

Sanders' plan expands on themes that have been central to his presidential campaign in Iowa since the start, including his emphasis on rural America and pledge to take on and break up big corporations.

During his Sunday speech, Sanders outlined the dire circumstances confronting rural America — population decline, school and hospital closures and rising addiction and suicide rates in many rural counties nationwide — as the impetus for his policy proposals, including breaking up existing agriculture monopolies and placing a moratorium on future mergers by big agriculture companies.

His plan calls for a shift from the current farm subsidy system toward a "parity system," which means "setting price floors and matching supply with demand so farmers are guaranteed the cost of production and family living expenses." Critics of the farm bill have argued that the current government subsidy system favors large family farms, and corporate farms over small family farms, and Sanders' policy aims to make that distribution more equal.

Such a major change in agriculture poli-

cy would require congressional action and would likely face fierce opposition from the farm lobby — but Sanders pledged to fight for farmers against corporate interests.

"In rural America, we are seeing giant agribusiness conglomerates extract as much wealth out of small communities as they possibly can while family farmers are going bankrupt and in many ways are being treated like modern-day indentured servants," Sanders said.

Sanders also would classify food supply security as a national security issue and increase scrutiny over foreign ownership of American farmland. And he suggests re-establishing a "national grain and feed reserve" in case of a natural disaster or severe weather event — a proposal inspired in part by the recent flooding on Iowa's eastern and western borders, which swamped acres of cropland and wiped out farmers' stores.

Iowa water quality getting worse, under funded

BY MITCHELL SCHMIDT
Tribune News Service

DES MOINES — New reports on Iowa water argue that nitrate and bacteria levels in private wells have increased for more than a decade, while water quality funding has remained inadequate.

The two reports were released April 24.

WATER QUALITY SPENDING

A report by the not-for-profit Iowa Policy Project took a look at the state's spending commitment to water quality and sought to identify funding levels needed to make "meaningful progress" on nutrient pollution reduction.

The report found that, despite the 2013 adoption of the state's Nutrient Reduction Strategy, water quality spending from Iowa's general fund dropped off post-recession and has yet to return.

Funding peaked in fiscal 2009 at more than \$45 million, but dropped to less than \$30 million in fiscal 2012. The number since has climbed to about \$43 million last year.

Meanwhile, the report notes that federal and state funding on nutrient reduction in Iowa reached \$512 million in 2017-18. The majority of that went to Conservation Reserve Program payments.

See **IOWA WATER**, A2

IOWA WATER FROM A1

"When you compare that to what the state is spending, you really see how little commitment we really have," said David Osterberg, co-founder of the Iowa Policy Project.

The report does note last year's \$282 million water quality bill — the first bill signed by Gov. Kim Reynolds. However, that bill is spread across 12 years, making for about \$24 million per year.

The report notes the need for water quality funding is "in the billions of dollars."

"It really shows this 2018 bill is small potatoes in regard to where we need to be," said Natalie Veldhouse, Iowa Policy Project research associate.

What's more, Iowa's share of the nutrient load in the Mississippi and Missouri river watersheds has increased between 2000 and 2016.

Osterberg said a sales tax on fertilizers, which can increase nutrient levels, could be a source of additional funding.

"Money doesn't solve everything, but no money is not going to solve anything and that's what we're seeing, is not enough money," Osterberg said.

CONTAMINANTS IN WELLS

A joint report released by the Environmental Working Group and the Iowa Environmental Council analyzed state records from 2002 to 2017. The study found that in private wells that were tested, the average nitrate levels grew from 3.1 parts per million in 2003 to 5.7 ppm in 2013.

"The state's own data show that agricultural pollution of drinking water in Iowa is worse than most people have previously thought," Anne

Schechinger, study author and senior economic analyst at EWG, said in a news release. "Wherever Iowans test for these contaminants, they have a pretty good chance of finding them."

According to the report, as many as 290,000 Iowans use private wells for drinking water, yet only 55,000 wells have been tested for nitrates and/or bacteria in the last 16 years. Of those tested, more than 40 percent tested positive for coliform bacteria at least once.

The Environmental Protection Agency, which enforces water quality rules, does not require testing on private wells.

The report aligns with similar findings in a 2016 Iowa Watch series on water quality, which found that:

- 49 percent of wells had detectable nitrate; 12 percent had levels higher than the EPA's public drinking water standard of 10 milligrams per liter.

- 43 percent of wells had total coliform bacteria; 19 percent had enterococci, a bacteria found in feces that can cause infections in wounds or in the urinary tract; 11 percent had E. coli.

Contaminants such as bacteria don't necessarily pose an immediate health concern, but can indicate the well is susceptible to outside contamination, such as agricultural runoff, the Iowa Watch report notes.

High nitrogen levels can pose health risks to infants by causing blue-baby syndrome, which affects the blood's ability to carry oxygen.

Animal rights groups sue Iowa over latest ag-gag law

DES MOINES, Iowa (AP) — Animal rights groups filed a federal lawsuit April 22 challenging a new Iowa law that makes it a trespass crime to conduct undercover investigations at livestock farms, a measure the Legislature approved just weeks after a federal judge struck down a similar law.

The latest bill was approved by the Senate and House on March 12 and signed into law by Gov. Kim Reynolds two days later. Iowa lawmakers passed the new law just two months after a federal judge struck down a law they passed in 2012 that the court concluded violated free-speech rights.

A federal judge has awarded more than \$181,000 in legal fees to lawyers who successfully fought the 2012 Iowa law.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Grey wolves deserve protection

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) wants to remove critical federal protections under the Endangered Species Act from all grey wolves in the lower 48 states. This would be a terrible mistake.

Minnesota is home to the only native gray wolf population in the continental U.S. Removing protections now will jeopardize 40 years of taxpayer-funded recovery that has only just started.

A healthy wolf population is great for Minnesota. As a keystone species, wolves are essential to establishing and maintaining healthy and thriving ecosystems. And people love the natural ecosystems they help create. Today wildlife watchers are outspending hunters 3 to 1.

Without protection, our wolves will face an onslaught of trophy hunting, trap-

ping, poisoning, baiting and hunting with hounds, and four decades of progress will be reversed.

One of the most commonly cited reasons for killing wolves is the misguided notion that this will protect livestock. Numerous scientific studies show that indiscriminately killing wolves leads to greater livestock losses by disrupting stable family structures. If you leave wolf packs intact, wolves will hunt more wild animals, and less livestock. The most effective remedies for protecting livestock are non-lethal measures.

The FWS comment period on this proposed change ends May 14. Let them know you want our wolves protected. That is the best action you can take now to protect our wolves.

Viki Morris, ROCHESTER

LETTERS INVITED

Agri News invites readers to express their opinions on matters of public interest through the Letters to the Editor column. We encourage shorter letters and reserve the right to edit letters. A letter must contain the signature of the author, the author's address and a telephone number where the writer can be reached between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. The telephone number won't be published, but it will be used to verify the letter. Anonymous letters will not be published. Send letters to: Letters to the Editor, Agri News, P.O. Box 6118, Rochester, MN 55903-6118, or e-mail them to kallas@agrinews.com.

Reports: Iowa water quality declines, underfunded

By Mitchell Schmidt

Gazette Des Moines Bureau

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ceptible to outside contamination, the Iowa Watch report notes.

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In addition to nitrates and bacteria, some Iowa homes struggle with arsenic levels in their water.

A 2017 U.S. Geological Survey report found that more than 35,000 — or 6 percent — of the roughly 591,000 domestic wells in Iowa likely have arsenic concentrations above 10 parts per billion, or the maximum level set by the EPA.

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The power of kindness

A teacher asked her young pupils to talk about their acts of kindness to animals. After several heart-stirring stories, the teacher asked one boy if he had anything to add. He replied rather proudly, "I kicked a boy once for kicking his dog."

OK, so he only got it half-right. Perhaps he should have paid better attention to Fred Rogers, the legendary television personality whose programs for children live on in the hearts of generations. He said, paraphrasing the author Henry James, "There are three ways to ultimate success: "The first way is to be kind.

"The second way is to be kind.

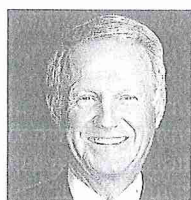
"The third way is to be kind."

Kindness is a fundamental life skill we should instill in children so they grow up to be kind adults.

Kindness is one of the strongest of all virtues. When you are good to others, you are best to yourself. Kindness is the oil that takes the friction out of life.

And the best part of all? You don't need any special schooling or skills. Everyone can be kind — if they decide to be.

"One who knows how to show and to accept kindness will be a friend better than any possession," is



HARVEY
MACKAY

a quote often attributed to Sophocles, the ancient Greek playwright.

Kindness is not weakness. Quite the opposite — kindness demonstrates a basic decency and respect that reflects a willingness to get along even when you disagree.

You've all heard the old saying that nice people finish last. Not true. Nice people can, and often do, finish first. No one wants to work with or do business with someone who treats them rudely or disrespectfully. Practice these habits until they become second nature:

First, be kind to yourself. You'll find being nice to others easier if you build your self-respect with positive thoughts about your personality and achievements.

Treat everyone with respect. Don't worry about who is on top. Treat everyone the way you want to be treated, regardless of their position or job title.

Share credit where it is due.

Say no when necessary. You can't do everything. But when you do say no, be polite and positive.

Plant seeds of kindness. Do something nice every day, even when your kindness might not have an immediate payoff.

Complete the statement: "If I were a kinder person, I would ..." and then act on it.

Set your sights on another. Pick a person and make him or her the recipient of a random act of kindness. Small acts often work wonders. Give a compliment. Offer help to someone struggling with their work. Share an inexpensive treat you know he or she will like. You likely will lift the spirits of the other person as well as yourself.

Kindness works everywhere: in the office and at home, even on the farm. Great Britain's Newcastle University found cattle treated with care and a "more personal touch" tended to produce more milk for farmers. Newcastle's School of Agriculture studied more than 500 farmers across the U.K. and found cows given names by their owners gave more than 50 percent more milk than cattle that were nameless. Yep, we all want to feel special.

Dale Carnegie, who made a fortune writing about how to make friends and influence people, liked to tell the

following story:

"Years ago, when I was a barefoot boy walking through the woods to a country school out in northwest Missouri, I read a fable about the sun and the wind. They quarreled about which was the stronger; and the wind said, 'I'll prove I am. See the old man down there with a coat? I bet I can get his coat off him quicker than you can.'

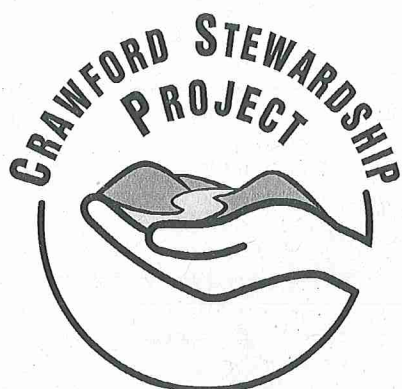
"So the sun went behind a cloud, and the wind blew until it was almost a tornado, but the harder it blew, the tighter the old man clutched his coat to him.

"Finally, the wind calmed down and gave up, and then the sun came out from behind the clouds and smiled kindly on the old man. Presently, he mopped his brow and pulled off his coat.

"The sun then told the wind that gentleness and kindness were always stronger than fury and force."

Mackay's Moral: If you are too busy to be kind, you are too busy.

Harvey Mackay is the author of the New York Times best-seller "Swim With the Sharks Without Being Eaten Alive." He can be reached through his website, harveymackay.com, by emailing harvey@mackay.com or by writing him at MackayMitchell Envelope Co., 2100 Elm St. SE, Minneapolis, MN 55414.



STEWARDSHIP NEWSLETTER

Spring/Summer 2019

crawfordstewardship.org

Drinking Water is Top Priority

Citizen advocacy needed to catalyze change

By Eli Mandel

Wisconsin has been facing multiple drinking water crisis for some time. Recently, we have seen increased priorities and attention shifting to address these public health threats in our water. Focus all across the state is reaching a critical point, culminating in newly elected Governor Evers declaring 2019 "the year of clean drinking water".

Crawford Stewardship Project has been working on these issues for over a decade, and is advocating for our rights to clean drinking water at the local, regional, and state level every day.

We launched our Drinking Water Education & Testing Program this winter, subsidizing and coordinating the testing of 53 private wells in Crawford County. Our efforts are focused on working to catalyze a multi-county coordinated testing in the heart of the Driftless, as well as increased protections for our

groundwater, now!

As part of our work to highlight the need for private well testing programs in our area, CSP staff have been attending local and state conservation meetings and lobbying our elected representatives to address groundwater contamination. The sensitive nature of our karst hydrogeology, which allows surface pollutants to infiltrate our drinking water, can lead to contamination and health impacts. Both nitrate, bacterial, and heavy metal pollutants can cause a wide-range of health issues, with many still being discovered, whose presence prevent many from drinking their well water in Wisconsin. Many more have contaminated water, but have not tested and so are not aware they have a problem.

Our state agencies recognized karstic geological sensitivity and studied contamination of drinking water in Eastern Wisconsin. This led the WDNR to

pass "Sensitive Area" modifications to NR 151 Runoff Management Implementation, as the regulatory structure of nutrient management plans (NMPs) and current best management practices fail to protect groundwater quality in their karst geology.

Though these new regulations have not yet been implemented, new research by U.S. Department of Agriculture microbiologist, Mark Borchardt, shows how important it is for all karstic areas of Wisconsin to receive further protections for their drinking water.

"Priority" continued page 3



Why we monitor ... and how you can take part!

By Omaru Heras

Have you ever thought about the Driftless region as a whole?

On the surface, we see rolling hills, trees, and wildlife, springs, streams, and rivers. Below the surface there exist fractures, caverns, underground rivers, and aquifers.

In between, we have a sadly eroding layer of some of the

best soil on the planet, and connecting these worlds are many springs, caves, and sinkholes.

These worlds are actively interacting with each other. Our rain and surface water becomes our groundwater, which, in turn pulses through our multitude of coldwater streams. This same water feeds our ecosystems, and fills the aquifers we drink from.

Monitoring the water is one of the best ways to know the health of the driftless karstic body on which we live. We can not have health and prosper if our water becomes contaminated. Unfortunately, major sources of potential contaminants abound on our sensitive flow-through hydrogeology.

CSP's Water Quality Monitor-

ing Program, working in concert with our partners at Valley Stewardship Network and the Wisconsin DNR's Water Action Volunteers, has been testing and assessing surface water quality for a decade in streams of particular concern.

With three main sites of concern to monitor monthly or

"Why" continued page 3

A truly heartfelt thank you to every one of the 203 wonderful individuals, families, businesses, and organizations who donated to Crawford Stewardship Project in the last year, keeping us going strong into the future. We are honored to continue this work for you, for this community, and for this beautiful place we call home.

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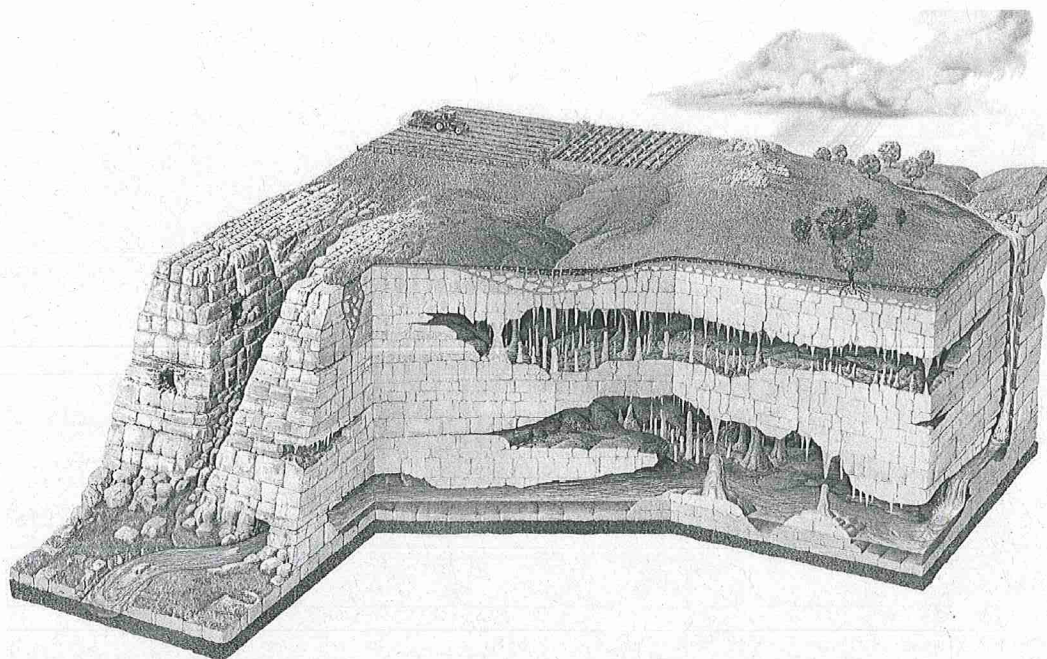
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"Why" continued from page 1



more often as needed, and plans to add more this season, we could use more volunteer water monitors in our project! This is an enjoyable way to get outside and visit a body of water, while producing important scientific data to inform our actions and those of our municipalities and state agencies.

This season's local water quality monitoring trainings:

Crawford Co: Steuben Lodge on May 4.

Vernon Co: Esofea County Park on May 11.

Trainings are 10 a.m. - 3 p.m. Lunch will be provided.

We are also in the process of setting up our own lab for bacterial and phosphorous testing, for any citizen scientists out there who would like to get involved in that end of our project!

For this, or for questions about the trainings, contact Omaru Heras, CSP Water Quality Monitoring Coordinator (oheras@crawfordstewardship.org).

Aside from providing these trainings and coordinating testing at sites of additional concern, CSP will be commenting on the Wisconsin DNR's new bacterial contamination standards, and will be advocating for sensible water protections at every level.

We do this because we recognize that all water is connected, and water influences everything. If we protect our streams, we protect our community health, as well as the health of the multi-billion dollar tourism and recreation industry. By monitoring, we can gather the information needed to track threats to our watersheds and help farmers keep their nutrients on their land. While the streams we monitor may be small, they are important to the many living beings who rely on them, and all lead into major rivers such as the Kickapoo, the Wisconsin, and the Mississippi.

"Priority" continued from page 1

Borchardt found nitrate and bacterial contamination comes mostly from agriculture, in an interview with WPR and Wisconsin Center for Investigative Journalism, he said, "Where we see the strong relationships, the strong linkages, those are with agricultural factors. So that would suggest that agriculture is primarily responsible for those two contaminants".

The number one risk factor for bacterial contamination was well proximity to a manure pit, with wells three miles away still showing some risk. Nitrate contamination is linked to the presence of agricultural fields, distance to the nearest ag field, distance to nearest manure lagoon, and depth to bedrock: It is well documented that 90% of nitrates found in groundwater come from fertilizers and manure from farming operations.

Locally, momentum and action are manifesting in our communities. This February, Crawford County Conservationist Dave Troester reported to the county Land & Water Conservation Committee that, "The ball is definitely rolling, and there is the possibility that Crawford, Richland, and Vernon counties will be able to collaborate in an initiative similar to the SWIGG [Southwest Wisconsin Groundwater and Geology] study currently underway in Grant, Lafayette, and Iowa counties. However, in Crawford and Richland counties, our major barrier is finding funds to pay for testing."

Local leaders in Crawford and Vernon counties, the Tainter Creek Producer-Led Watershed Council, continue to use state funds to test wells in their watershed, as well as implement-

ing conservation practices and holding educational events. This shining example of local farmers coming together to work towards solutions is exactly the kind of action we need.

Further, we need a coordinated effort to study our local hydrogeology and test our drinking water. Both local government action and state funding are needed to accomplish these goals. For this to manifest we need your help!

Recently, Dave Troester told the Land & Water Conservation Committee that he briefed the Crawford County Finance Committee, "well water testing is becoming a higher profile citizen issue, and there is a lot of interest in pursuing testing in Crawford County." Your County officials need to hear from you, too!

Please reach out to your elect-

ed representatives, both at the county level (your County Board Supervisor) and your representatives in the State Capitol. Tell them that these issues are a top priority for our communities: both the need for a large-scale groundwater and geological study and testing, as well as the need for further protections to ensure our rights to clean drinking water.

Join us on April 27, 11 a.m. - 12:30 p.m., at the Crawford County Highway Dept. for our Public Drinking Water Forum. UW-Extension Groundwater Education Specialist Kevin Masarik will join Crawford Stewardship Project staff to discuss the results from our recent well testings and the state of our drinking water in the area. The forum is free and open to the public.

Industrial Ag on the move

We will show a different way is possible

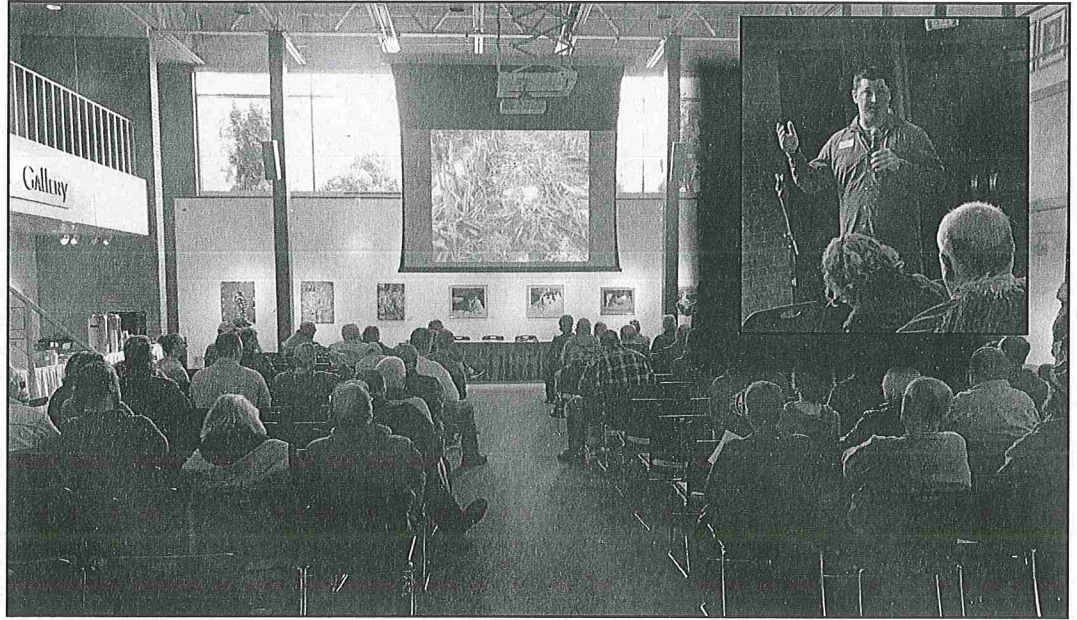
By Forest Jahnke

It has come to our attention that a 10,000 sow Concentrated Animal Feeding Operation (CAFO) may be in the planning process for installation along Harvest Lane, south of Steuben. Neighbors have already been asked to receive manure from the potential facility.

We are unsure of the timeline, and no permits have yet been applied for, though our sources report that spreading land is being requested for spreading season of 2020. We are on high alert for permit applications, and in the meantime suggest that all neighbors get their wells tested as soon as possible.

Our predictions a decade ago of the consequences of having too many animals concentrated on not enough land over karstic hydrogeology have proven, unfortunately, all too accurate.

After ten years of monitoring



Keynote speaker Dan Shelliam of Windy Hill Ranch near Hazel Green (inset) describes his regenerative agriculture experiences as "A great deal, in so many ways!"

streams downgrade from the Roth Feeder Pig CAFO's operations near Wauzeka, we have

found alarming results for coliforms, *E. coli*, and phosphorous on a regular basis. Antibiotic resistant bacteria have also been found. Rarely are results under state standards for streams and rivers, and often surpass standards by two to ten fold, or even more, resulting in the DNR designating a small stream we monitor as "impaired" last year. We have watched, through reviews of their annual Nutrient Management Plans, as soil phosphorus has skyrocketed well beyond allowable levels from over-spreading on many fields.

We have helped neighbors test their wells, as proximity to a manure lagoon and ag fields with nutrient overloading are the top risk factors for drinking water issues, as has been seen in La Crosse County and elsewhere where monitoring wells have been installed. A recent analysis of the substantial data collected in eastern Wisconsin by Mark Borchardt, of the USDA Ag Research Services, confirmed this correlation.

We have been busy in the last months supporting allies

in surrounding counties with their own struggles with threats from industrial agriculture. In Grant County, we attended the permitting hearing for a hog CAFO in Rockville surrounded by the most dramatically sink-hole-riddled terrain we've seen in the region.

Meanwhile, the Pipestone "Timberwolf" CAFO outside of Fennimore (with the 7.3 million gallon manure lagoon on top of a large recognized sink-hole) constructed their brand new facility and even held an open house in empty barns to convince the public that this vertically integrated out-of-state corporation cares and will do no harm. However, reports from neighbors of Pipestone's two year old "Blakes Point" facility include a disregard for erosion control measures, unlicensed borrow pits, high mortality rates, and cracking cement. Despite well-reasoned and science-backed concerns from neighbors, these facilities in Grant County continue to be permitted with little or no additional conditions.

"Different way" continued page 5



Cost cutting, yield boosting, water absorbing, nutrient retaining, carbon capturing, life-promoting... our panel was happy to explain the many benefits of regenerative agriculture!

Members of the panel for the regenerative agriculture event Saturday, March 30, at the University of Wisconsin-Platteville included, back row from the left, Ag Equipment Technician Instructor John Kvigne from Southwest Wisconsin Technical College in Fennimore; Daniel H. Smith, Regional Nutrient and Pest Management Specialist with UW-Madison; and UW-Platteville Assistant Professor of Soil and Crop Science Dr. Andrew D. Cartmill. In the front row are (left) farmer Tom Hamm and (right) Joshua Kamps, Agriculture Educator with the UW Extension in Lafayette County.

Photo courtesy of David Ralph

*"Different way" continued
from page 4*

In stark contrast, to the north, La Crosse County public officials are showing an impressive level of oversight and concern for the groundwater issues identified around the Babcock Genetics hog CAFO near Holmen, requiring more monitoring wells, and demanding regulatory action to prevent further drinking water contamination.

We can also report on many opportunities in sustainable agriculture, after an exciting day of learning at the Grant County Rural Stewardship Project Farmer-to-Farmer Regenerative Ag event we co-sponsored, and yet another season coming up of pasture walks of local rotationally grazed farms. As your loyal local environmental watchdog, Crawford Stewardship Project will let you know of all threats and opportunities as we learn of them.

Introduction to UW Extension Ag Agent Adam Hady



By Eli Mandel

With the new year, Crawford County has a new UW Extension agriculture agent. Adam Hady, who lives with his family outside of Boaz, will be splitting his time and duties between Crawford and Richland counties, the latter where he has worked since 2004. Adam earned his bachelor's degree in animal science from UW-River Falls and a master's degree in adult education from UW-Platteville.

Adam says of his new position, "As with all of Extension, we are the outreach education arm of the University System. I can bring some knowledge and resources of the University to the Crawford County agricultural community through workshops, field days, media communications and one-on-one interactions."

When asked about the uniqueness of this area, he responded, "the topography and landscape are what makes Crawford County special. From an agricultural perspective this leads to a lot of diversity in production systems and commodities."

How can you help us all be better stewards of our land and waters? "I think the best way that I can help is to be the resource that can provide unbiased research based in-

formation to individuals and the public, so they can make informed decisions that will benefit the land and water resources."

Lastly, we asked about what solutions does he see for farmers in the area? How can we make farming a sustainable profession in this region? "I don't know if there is a one size fits all answer to the solutions in the area, I do think if producers/ farmers/ landowners are able to increase management capacities, ask the right questions, and make informed sound decisions the ability to be more sustainable increases."

Adam is available by visiting the Crawford County UW-Extension Office at 225 North Beaumont Road, Suite 240, Prairie du Chien, calling 608-326-0223, or email adam.hady@ces.uwex.edu.

CSP Karst research spreading to Grant County... and informing statewide conversations

By Forest Jahnke

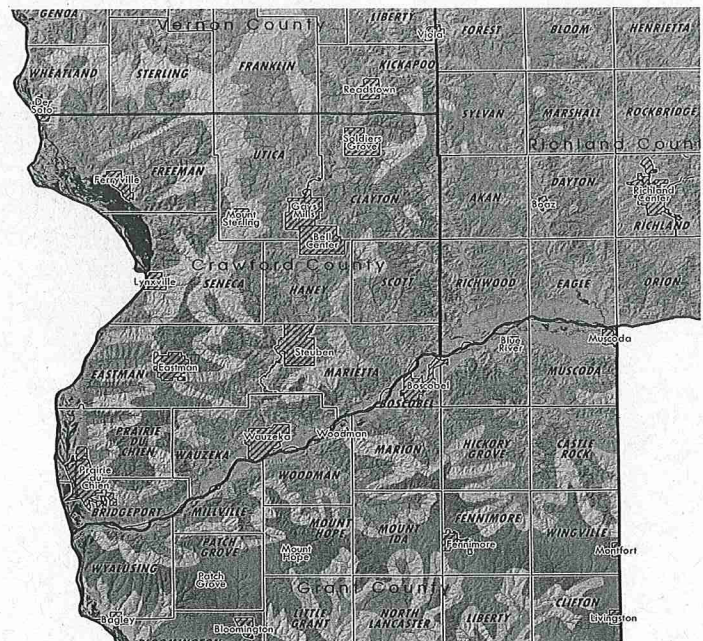
With so much going on, our momentum on the Karst Landscapes and Groundwater Susceptibility Survey has slowed, but important progress continues to be made as we look into possibilities of getting our research published, and we continue to share our maps and methodologies with surrounding counties.

This summer and fall, University of Wisconsin, Platteville, Geology Professor Lynette Dornak will be using the methodology Legion GIS developed for us to identify "closed depression" points in Grant County. In a Driftless landscape, each closed depression (a hole, indentation, or pit) indicates either human or underground karst influence.

"This project will allow my GIS students to engage in a learning exercise that will help them to refine their skills and also make a real-life contribution to our surrounding community," says Professor Dornak.

This dataset will be ripe for the sort of karst citizen science events we held here in Crawford County in the last couple years, allowing regular folks to help sort out the sinkholes from the culverts, cattle ponds, building foundations, and other human impacts.

Our research continues to be invaluable and timely at hearings across the region and state, as we push for the state to recognize the sensitivities of this area and take action to protect our groundwater.



Our shared geology shows lobes of carbonates and sandstones. A limestone cap over much of Grant County makes them particularly susceptible to sinkholes, springs, and other karst features.

Crawford Stewardship Project
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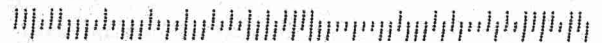


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Karst Exploration 2019

September 14

1-4:30pm

Steuben Lodge

48193 County Rd E, Steuben

Join us for another karst adventure to learn
about the world beneath our feet!

1-2pm - Professor Kelvin Rodolfo will present an
engaging 500-million years of geological history
and what that means for our lives.

2-4:30pm - Explore local sinkholes to see for yourself
the results of karst geology on our landscape.

*Please bring appropriate clothing for walking
through fields and woods.*

Light refreshments provided.



Tips For Happy Cats

Keep Your Cat Safe and Happy – Indoors

It's a myth that going outside is a requirement for feline happiness. Playing regularly with a cat and providing her with entertaining toys can easily satisfy her stalking instinct, keep her stimulated and provide the exercise she needs to stay healthy and happy. It also keeps local wildlife safe!

Here are some tips for making the great indoors an interesting, feline-friendly environment that meets all of your cat's needs.

- **Start 'em Young:** Kittens who are kept indoors are usually happy to stay there as they grow up.
- **Good Fences = Happy Kitties:** Provide a screened porch for your cat to experience the outdoors safely. Consider building or purchasing a "catio" or similar enclosure to allow your cat to get a taste of the outside without the risks. A regular fence may not prevent other animals from entering your yard, so you should always be present when you allow your cat outside in your yard.
- **Walk This Way:** If you live in a peaceful neighborhood in which you can walk without encountering loose dogs, consider buying a harness and training your cat to walk on a leash. This training takes time and patience for both you and the cat and it's easiest when your cat is young. Some

cats can even be harnessed and tied to a stationary object to enjoy the outdoors while you are gardening nearby (but be sure to never leave your cat alone while she is tethered).

- **Hang Out:** Install a perch indoors near a sunny window; padded perches can be purchased at many pet supply stores or through catalog retailers. Another option is an enclosure that sits in a window frame (much like an air conditioning unit) and provides a secure space in which your kitty can hang out. Larger perches can attach to the side of a house or ground-floor apartment patio.
- **Tree's Company:** Buy a ready-made cat tree (often called a "kitty condo,") or make your own. A cat tree can be short or may stretch from floor to ceiling. It provides great climbing opportunities and, in multi-cat households, creates more play and rest areas by taking advantage of vertical space. If you can, locate the cat tree next to a window so your cat can watch the action outdoors.
- **Play Time:** Play with your cat each day. Try different types of toys that allow your cat to stalk, chase, pounce and kick. When you've tired out your cat, place toys that could harm him (such as toys with strings attached) out of reach. When you can't be

there to supervise, leave out "toys" such as paper bags (with the handles removed) or cardboard boxes. Be sure to switch the toys from time to time so that they seem "new" and more interesting to your cat.

- **Bring The Outdoors Inside:** Plant cat grass (available from pet supply stores) in indoor pots so your feline can graze.
- **Identification, Please:** Even indoor cats should still be outfitted with a collar and visible identification. The occasional open window (make sure your windows have secure screens) or door offers a tempting opportunity for your cat to escape to the outdoor. And your cat may become frightened and make her way outside if strangers come to work on your house or if there is a fire or similar disaster. The collar and visible ID could help someone get your pet back to you.
- **Chip In For Safety:** Consider having your cat microchipped and keep your cat contact information with the microchip registry up-to-date. If you do lose your cat, contact your local animal shelter immediately to file a report. Shelter workers can give you tips on getting your pet back home safely.

Why You Should Adopt A Rescue Animal

Did you know that local shelters and rescue agencies—large and small—always have a great selection of animals looking for loving, forever homes?

You can find cats and dogs, birds, small animals and sometimes even horses and livestock!

In fact, any animal available for sale at a pet store or from a breeder is probably waiting for adoption in a nearby shelter or rescue.

Here are the facts:

- Each year, 6 to 8 million pets end up in shelters; half of those will probably not be adopted.
- Most pets end up homeless through no fault of their own—"moving" and "landlord issues" are the top reasons people give for relinquishing their pets, meaning shelters and rescue groups are full of wonderful, family-ready pets.
- Pets adopted from shelters and rescue groups typically cost less than pets purchased or even acquired for free. Once you add in the cost of vaccinations, spay/neuter surgery, microchipping, deworming

and other "extras" included in your adoption fee, you'll probably be surprised what a bargain an adopted pet really is!

To adopt a rescue animal, you should follow these three steps:

1. Determine what kind of pet would be the best fit for your household:

When looking to adopt a shelter pet, it is important to sit down as a family and consider these questions:

- Do you have enough time to devote to the daily needs of a dog?
- Is there someone in your household who is allergic to cats or dogs or another animal you may be considering?
- Have you considered a non-traditional pet such as a guinea pig or another small animal?

By having an open and honest discussion about your lifestyle and abilities to care for an animal, you can decide together as a family what type of pet is best for you.

2. Visit your local shelter:

Once you've decided on what type of pet you want to adopt, check the website of your local shelter and then visit your local shelter in person. Sometimes all it takes to find your perfect match is to look directly into a pet's eyes and fall in love!

3. Spread the word to others:

Once you've found your rescue pet, make sure that you spread the word to your family and loved ones how rewarding the adoption experience has been.

If they hear from a trusted friend that a rescue pet is just as—if not more—loving than a store-bought pet, they'll be more likely to adopt too!

And the more people who adopt, the fewer rescue pets there are in shelters!



**THE HUMANE SOCIETY
OF THE UNITED STATES**
humanesociety.org

ACTIONS FOR ANIMALS

- Advocate for stronger laws against poaching and trophy hunting.
- Shop with compassion. Always choose garments and accessories free of fur or fur trim.
- Don't support circuses that use wild animal acts—there are many more humane alternatives for your entertainment.
- Start the week off right with Meatless Mondays. For more information visit humanesociety.org/trymeatlessmonday.
- Help end cosmetics testing on animals by purchasing cruelty-free health and beauty products.
- Create a safe habitat for wildlife in your own backyard.
- Keep cats indoors for their own safety as well as for the sake of birds and other wildlife.
- Encourage wildlife-friendly practices in your community.

**For more information,
visit humanesociety.org.**



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13 WAYS TO CREATE A HUMANE BACKYARD



Turn your outdoor space into habitat for wildlife. Every day, more and more wildlife habitat is lost to the spread of development. Give a little back by creating a Humane Backyard.

It doesn't matter whether you have a small apartment balcony, a townhouse with a sliver of ground, a suburban yard, a sprawling corporate property, a place of worship or a community park. You can make any outdoor space into a safe place for wildlife, people and pets to coexist.

To get started, check out our tips below (you might already have some of the basics down). Take the Humane Backyard pledge at humanebackyard.org.

1. Provide water

Whether it's winter, summer or somewhere in between, wild animals need reliable sources of fresh water. It can be as simple as setting up a birdbath, or if you have the room, you can create a small pond.

2. Offer natural food sources

Native plants, bushes and trees are usually the best foods you can give wildlife. You can also supplement your offerings with birdfeeders, especially in winter.

3. Skip the lawn chemicals

Avoid using chemical-laden fertilizers, pesticides and herbicides that can be harmful not only to wildlife but to pets and children, too.

4. Make your windows bird-safe

If you're attracting birds with food and water, make sure they're not going to be flying into your windows.

5. Shrink your lawn a little

If you can, stop mowing part of your lawn. It's less work for you (and better habitat for wildlife).

6. Build a brush pile

Turn leaves, tree limbs and other yard debris into a simple brush pile to provide extra shelter for wild animals.

7. Be a friend to bees

As pollinators, bees are vital to farms and gardens, but their numbers are on the decline. You can help by providing a safe, healthy habitat for bees. You can even put up a little bee abode.

(And no need to fear bees—leave them alone, and they'll leave you alone, too.)

8. Put up a bat house

Bats pollinate plants, disperse seeds and help keep the insect population in check.

Return the favor by giving them a safe place to roost.

9. Make your swimming pool safe

Backyard pools can be deadly for wildlife. Take a few precautions to make your pool safer for wild animals.

10. Help out bugs (they're animals, too)

Insects make up 70 percent of the animal kingdom, and most of them are harmless or even helpful. Attract beneficial insects to your yard, garden, park, place of worship, etc. and look for eco- and animal-friendly approaches to insect control.

11. Keep cats inside

Keep your cat(s) indoors for their own safety as well as that of wildlife.

12. Change with the seasons

Follow our tips for maintaining your humane backyard as you clean up your yard or other outdoor space in fall and spring.

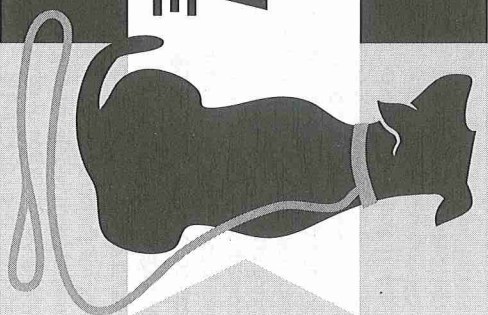
13. Find humane solutions to any wildlife problems

Birds, bats and squirrels outdoors are great—not so much when they're living in your attic. We have effective, humane solutions to any wildlife problems you might encounter.

CREATE A HUMANE BACKYARD

Take the Humane Backyard pledge at humanebackyard.org.

BRINGING YOUR NEW DOG HOME



PREPARATION AND PATIENCE ARE KEY TO BUILDING A HAPPY RELATIONSHIP

The key to helping your new dog make a successful adjustment to your home is being prepared and being patient. It can take anywhere from two days to two months for you and your pet to adjust to each other.

The following tips can help ensure a smooth transition.

FIRST, GATHER YOUR DOG'S SUPPLIES

Prepare the things your dog will need in advance. You'll need a collar and leash, food and water bowls, food and, of course, some toys. And don't forget to order an identification tag right away.

ESTABLISH HOUSE RULES IN ADVANCE

Work out your dog-care plan

in advance among the human members of your household. Who will walk the dog first thing in the morning? Who will feed him at night? Will Fido be allowed on the couch, or won't he? Where will he rest at night? Are there any rooms in the house that are off-limits?

PLAN YOUR DOG'S ARRIVAL

Try to arrange the arrival of your new dog for a weekend or when you can be home for a few days. Get to know each other and spend some quality time together. Don't forget the jealousy factor—make sure you don't neglect other pets and people in your household!

BE PREPARED FOR HOUSETRAINING

Assume your new dog is



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not housetrained, and work from there. Read over the housetraining information given to you at the time of adoption and check out our housetraining tips for puppies or adult dogs. Be consistent, and maintain a routine. A little extra effort on your part to come home straight from work each day will pay off in easier, faster housetraining.

MAKE SURE ALL YOUR PETS ARE HEALTHY

Animal shelters take in animals with widely varying backgrounds, some of whom have not been previously vaccinated. Inevitably, despite the best efforts of shelter workers, viruses can be spread and may occasionally go home with adopted animals. If you already have dogs or cats at home, make sure they are up-to-date on their shots and in good general health before introducing your new pet.

Take your new dog to the veterinarian within a week after adoption. There, he will receive a health check and any needed vaccinations. If your dog has not been spayed or neutered, make that appointment! There are already far too many homeless puppies and dogs; don't let your new pet add to the problem. Most likely, the shelter will require that you have your pet spayed or neutered anyway. If you need more information about why it is so important to spay or neuter your dog, read our online information on spaying and neutering.

GIVE YOUR DOG A CRATE

A crate may look to you like the canine equivalent of a

jail cell, but to your dog, who instinctively likes to den, it's a room of his own. Of course, you won't want to crate your dog all day or all night, or he will consider it a jail cell. Just a few, regular hours a day should be sufficient.

The crate should not contain wire where his collar or paws can get caught, and should be roomy enough to allow your dog to stand up, turn around, and sit comfortably in normal posture.

If a crate isn't an option, consider some sort of confinement to a dog-proofed part of your home. A portion of the kitchen or family room can serve the purpose very well. (A baby gate works perfectly.)

USE TRAINING AND DISCIPLINE TO CREATE A HAPPY HOME

Dogs need order. Let your pet know from the start that you are in charge around here. When you catch him doing something he shouldn't, don't lose your cool. Stay calm, and let him know immediately, in a loud and disapproving voice, that he has misbehaved. Reward him with praise when he does well, too! Sign up for a local dog training class, and you'll learn what a joy it is to have a well-behaved dog. Also be sure to read our tip sheet on training your dog with positive reinforcement.

LET THE GAMES BEGIN

Dogs need an active life. That means you should plan plenty of exercise and game time for your pet. Enjoy jogging or Frisbee? You can bet your dog will, too. If running around the park is

too energetic for your taste, try throwing a ball or a stick, or just going for a long walk together. When you take a drive in the country or visit family and friends, bring your dog and a leash along.

BE PATIENT AND ENJOY THE RESULTS

Finally, be reasonable in your expectations. Life with you is a different experience for your new companion, so give him time to adjust. You'll soon find out that you've made a friend for life. No one will ever greet you with as much enthusiasm or provide you with as much unqualified love and loyalty as your dog will. Be patient, and you will be amply rewarded.

CHOOSING THE RIGHT DOG FOR YOU

Keep an open mind when adopting, and you'll find the dog (or dogs) that will fit your needs and lifestyle. The best thing about adopting a dog from an animal shelter or rescue group? So many amazing pooches to choose from! Man's best friends come in all shapes, sizes and—of course—personalities.

While almost any shelter dog can make a wonderful, lifelong companion for you and your family, some dogs will need more training, some will need more exercise and some will be happy to just sit on your lap staring into your eyes, trying to hypnotize you into providing more kibble.

Which kind of dog are you looking for? You may have an image of your perfect dog

in mind, but is your heart open to a canine Mr. Right you weren't quite expecting? Browse adoptable dogs near you at *The Shelter Pet Project*, and consider the following questions:

WHAT'S YOUR LIFESTYLE?

If you live alone in a small, third-floor apartment, for instance, adopting a large, active retriever-mix might not be the best choice ... but then, if you're a runner and want a partner for your jogs, or you have a large family of kids who will play with the dog all the time, a retriever-mix could be fine! A dog's size, exercise requirements, friendliness, assertiveness and compatibility with children should all figure into your decision. Remember, you're not just getting a dog; your new dog is getting a family! Find the next great love of your life at a local shelter or rescue.

PUREBRED OR MAGICAL MIX?

How do you find out which dogs have the qualities you're looking for?

Information is the key: learn about the personalities of various breeds, visit with animals at the shelter and speak with an adoption counselor for guidance.

Dogs fall into one of two categories:

Purebreds or mixed breeds. Most animal shelters have plenty of both. The only significant difference between the two is that purebreds, because their parents and other ancestors are all members of the same breed, are similar to a specific "breed standard." This doesn't always tell you much

about a dog's good health or how she'll behave, but it will help give you an idea of how big she's likely to get and whether her ears will be adorably droopy or sharp and perky (and other such physical traits). With mixes, you'll get a unique, never-seen-before blend.

MORE ABOUT MIXED BREEDS

Of course, the size, appearance and temperament of most mixed breed dogs can be predicted as well. After all, mixed breeds are simply combinations of different breeds. So if you know the ancestry of a particular mixed-breed puppy or can identify what type of dog he is (e.g., terrier mix), you have a good chance of knowing how he'll turn out, too.

Mixed breeds are also more likely to be free of genetic defects common to certain purebred dogs because of overbreeding.

VISIT WITH SHELTER ANIMALS

While you're at the shelter, keep in mind that the animals there will be stressed out; quite often, a dog's true colors won't show until he's away from other animals and the shelter environment. So even if you walk past a kennel with a dog who isn't vying for your attention, don't count him out. He may just be a little scared or lonely.

An adoption counselor can help you select canines who will match your lifestyle.

When you spend time with each animal, consider the following questions:

- **How old is the dog?** You may be thinking about getting a puppy, but

young dogs usually require much more training and supervision. If you lack the time or patience to housetrain your pup or to correct problems like chewing and jumping, an adult dog may be a better choice.

• How shy or assertive is the dog?

Although an active, bouncy dog might catch your eye, a quieter pooch might be a better match if you just want a TV and hanging-out buddy.

• Is the animal good with kids?

Ask questions of the adoption counselors, but remember, not all shelter dogs will have a known history. In general, a friendly dog who likes to be touched and is not sensitive to handling and noise is a dog who will probably thrive in a house full of kids. If you get a puppy for your kids, remember that baby animals can be fragile and that, regardless of the dog's age or breed, you'll want to supervise his interactions with kids.

CHOOSE A PAL FOR LIFE

Shelter animals deserve lifelong homes. If you're looking for your perfect pal, check out The Shelter Pet Project's website, which can help you with your search. After all, you're choosing a pal likely to be with you 10 to 15 years—or even longer. There's a dog out there who will LOVE being part of your family!

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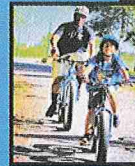
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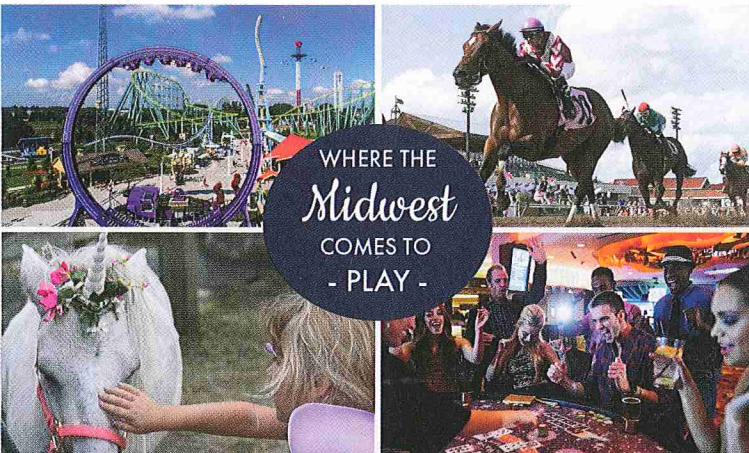
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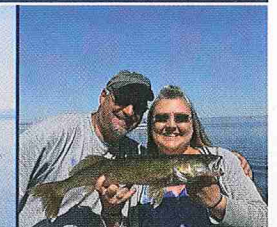
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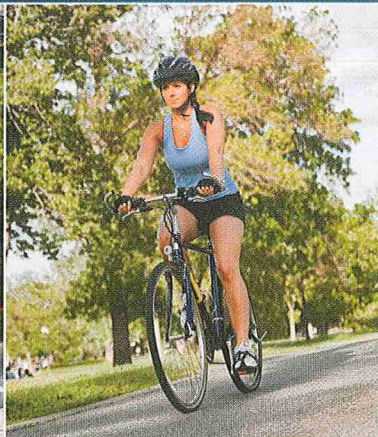
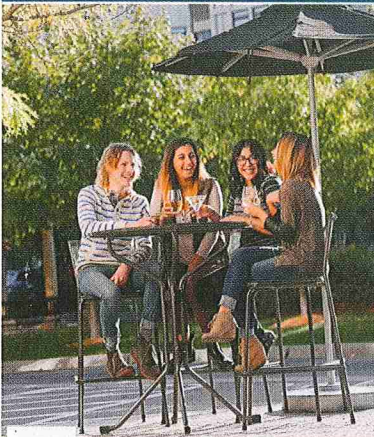
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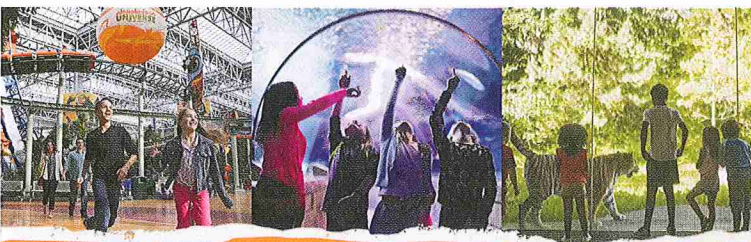


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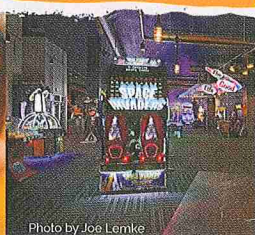


Photo by Joe Lemke



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Midwest

Animal rights groups sue over new ag-gag law

BY DAVID PITT
Associated Press

DES MOINES, Iowa — Animal rights groups filed a federal lawsuit last week challenging a new Iowa law that makes it a trespass crime to conduct undercover investigations at livestock farms, a measure the Legislature approved just weeks after a federal judge struck down a similar law.

The latest bill was approved by the Senate and House on March 12 and signed into law by Gov. Kim Reynolds two days later. It creates a trespass charge for those who use deception to gain access to a farm to cause physical or economic harm, with a penalty of up to a year in jail. It also allows for a conspiracy charge that carries a similar penalty.

Iowa lawmakers passed the new law just two months after a federal judge struck down a law they passed in 2012 that the court concluded violated free-speech rights. That law made it a fraud crime to lie to get a job at a farm to do undercover investigations. The ruling is on appeal to the 8th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals.

The latest lawsuit filed April 22 in U.S. District Court in Des Moines claims the new law, which became effective the day Reynolds signed it, violates constitutional free speech and due process rights and is unconstitutionally vague and overly broad.

The Animal Legal Defense Fund, Iowa Citizens For Community Improvement, Bailing Out Benji, People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals and Center for Food Safety ask a judge to prevent the state from enforcing the law and to strike it down as unconstitutional. The American Civil Liberties Union of Iowa is providing legal assistance in the case.

The lawsuit names Reynolds, Iowa Attorney General Tom Miller and the county prosecutor in Montgomery County, the site of an egg farm where PETA would conduct an undercover investigation in

response to a 2017 whistleblower complaint.

"It's important for Iowans because these are core and fundamental free speech rights," said ACLU Iowa attorney Rita Bettis Austen. "It's also important for Iowans because the actual violations that are documented through these undercover efforts, whether conditions inside puppy mills or abusive violations of labor rights for the least powerful Iowa workers who are in these Iowa ag facilities, simply wouldn't get covered. They wouldn't even be known except for these undercover investigative methods."

Sen. Ken Rozenboom, the Republican who managed the new law on the Senate floor, has said it is more narrowly focused than the 2012 law. Rozenboom, a hog farmer, argued during Senate debate that "agriculture in Iowa deserves protection from those who would intentionally use deceptive practices to distort public perception of best practices to safely and responsibly produce food."

"I wish they'd find something better to do than defraud liars and people that misrepresent the truth," he said when told the new challenge had been filed.

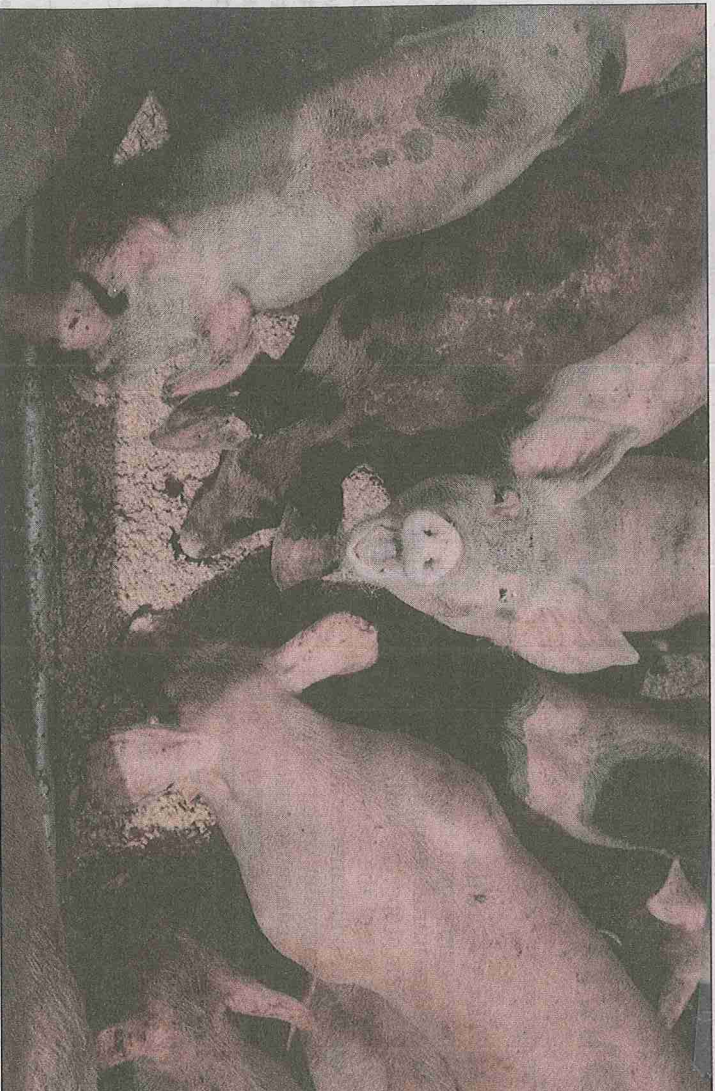
Reynolds said in a statement that she's committed to protecting Iowa farmers.

"We are working with the attorney general's office to ensure this legislation that supports farmers is upheld," she said.

The groups say their inability to conduct undercover investigations in Iowa allows agricultural enterprises in Iowa to keep hidden from public scrutiny food safety, labor and animal welfare issues.

The animal rights groups also say the new law applies to the states estimated 250 puppy mills, facilities that breed large numbers of dogs for the pet trade, some of which have been found to allow dogs to suffer in abusive conditions.

Business



Pigs eat from a trough at the Las Vegas Livestock pig farm in Las Vegas. The farm feeds its pigs with food waste from Las Vegas casinos.

Associated Press

Vegas pigs eat high on the hog

BY REGINA GARCIA CANO
Associated Press

LAS VEGAS — At a farm outside Las Vegas, a herd of pigs feasts on lobster, sausage links and beef. In town, people at a community center sit for a dinner that may include sliders and truffle mac and cheese.

The two meals have something in common: Both came from the kitchens of Sin City's opulent casinos, where the axiom of excess is increasingly being reconsidered and waste reduction has taken hold.

The environmental and financial impacts of leftover food are more important than ever to Las Vegas' world-famous casinos, which in recent years have developed and expanded innovative practices to cut back on what they send to the landfill by thousands of tons a year.

Food scraps are turned into compost or taken to a farm to feed thousands of pigs. Expired minibar snacks are

donated to community organizations. Banquet meals that were never served go to a food bank. The comprehensive efforts vary slightly among operators, and some were recently recognized by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

Guests of the glitzy mega resorts will never witness the not-so-glamorous efforts, but they exemplify the extent to which companies are going to improve their bottom line and make a dent on a global issue.

"Most people, when they think about recycling, they think about the standard metal, plastic, paper — and the reality is, for an organization like MGM, food, food waste, food scraps is a significant part of our waste footprint," said Yalmaz Siddiqui, vice president of corporate sustainability at MGM Resorts International. "Our main approach is to think about the type of food that's coming out of our operations and directing that type of food to the best desti-

nation it could go to."

In 2016, MGM began donating fully cooked but never-served meals from conventions and other large events to Three Square, southern Nevada's only food bank. The company has donated more than 700,000 pounds of cooked food, kitchen ingredients, minibar snacks and extra food stored at warehouses.

The EPA in March honored MGM's Bellagio casino-resort for its food recovery efforts. The property last year sent 2,210 tons of food waste to the pig farm outside Las Vegas, up 16% from 2017 and 455% from 2015.

The farm's 5,000 pigs are fed boiled food scraps exclusively. Trucks haul 25 tons to 35 tons of food a day from the Strip to the farm. The process is part of the waste management package the companies purchase.

"They probably have eaten more lobster than me," farm manager Sarah Stallard said.

Opinions

Iowa needs to do more for its water

An April report on Iowa's water quality is alarming for farmers and residents.

The report ought to serve as a clarion call for action because it concludes that inadequate funding and commitment to protecting the resource has caused the state to backslide.

The publication, authored by the Iowa Policy Project, finds that bacteria and nitrogen levels in private wells have increased for a decade. Iowa, with an estimated 480 impaired streams and lakes, is aware something must be done.

Iowa lawmakers and Gov. Terry

Branstad took an initial step to protect water quality through the state's Nutrient Reduction Strategy in 2013.

It's not as though Iowa hasn't spent money protecting its water. The state committed \$43 million to the effort in 2018 and the federal and state commitment to environmental protection reached \$512 million in the fiscal year. Most of the federal contribution was committed to the Conservation Reserve Program, which is perhaps the nation's most popular environmental effort.

"When you compare that to what the state is spending you really see how little commitment we really

have," Iowa Policy Project co-founder David Osterberg told the Associated Press.

Osterberg has an obvious bone to pick, but he isn't entirely wrong. Iowa does need to be more aggressive in its approach.

The same could be said for other states, including Minnesota, that have impaired waters.

Minnesota, under the direction of former Gov. Mark Dayton, established its buffer law in 2017. The law requires perennial vegetation buffers of up to 50 feet along lakes, rivers and streams and 16.5-foot buffers along ditches. The vegetation may filter

out most of the phosphorus, nitrogen and sediment that harm lakes and streams.

Iowa can start to do more by testing more private wells in the state. The Environmental Working Group and the Iowa Environmental Council issued a report that found that there are 290,000 private wells in the state and only 55,000 have been tested for nitrates. Nearly 50 percent of those tested had detectable levels of nitrates and 43 percent had coliform bacteria.

Iowa lawmakers — who as a group have been branded "do-nothings" for their approach to water quality initiatives — must go beyond the voluntary

nutrition strategy that it established in Branstad's administration.

Iowa contributes far too much to the total nitrates found in the Mississippi River and the Gulf of Mexico. More aggressive approaches to protecting water resources are needed.

The April report's alarm should reach lawmakers' ears. Iowa citizens have overwhelmingly and repeatedly voted to support water quality initiatives. The time for action is now. Iowa's future depends on a comprehensive effort to protect its streams, lakes and private water wells.