

**Letter to the Editor (Star Tribune March 30, 2018)**

## **TARIFFS AND HOG FARMING**

Really, just another reminder of the consolidation in agriculture

The imposition of probable Chinese tariffs on American pork products is a wake-up call for all industrial hog producers (“Hog farmers on trade war’s front line,” March 24).

Encouraged by large multinational corporations that they must “feed the world,” these contract farmers fell for the corporate line and thus became dependent upon the export market. Our family farm in southern Minnesota is surrounded by 11 swine factory farms, and soon a 12th, in a three-mile radius. The industrial model, known as vertical integration, has forced thousands of independent family farmers off the land while allowing large corporate interests to control production from the producer to the consumer. The profit lands on the bottom line of the corporate balance sheet and does not circulate in local communities. This is not farming. The top-down vertical integration model is responsible for the hollowing out of rural communities and must be abandoned. We are all bound together by care, compassion and community and must rebuild our rural communities from the bottom-up.

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This letter was submitted on behalf of Dodge County Concerned Citizens.