

## **PRESS RELEASE - FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE - UPDATE 1/27/17**

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### **Panel Challenges Factory Farming in Minnesota**

In an unprecedented action, a coalition of national and area environmental, religious and community groups are joining forces to challenge and question the social justice, environmental and animal welfare impacts of factory farming in Minnesota. An event entitled, "Factory Farming in Minnesota - Time for a Change?" will occur on Saturday, February 4, 2017 at 10 am at Assisi Heights Spirituality Center, 1001 - 14th Street NW, Rochester, Minnesota.

The event is co-hosted by the Sisters of St. Francis - Assisi and Saint Mary's University of Minnesota/Cascade Meadow Wetlands and Environmental Science Center. The event is free and open to the public.

The event is the brainchild of Dr. Jeff Johnson, a frequent lecturer on the topic of animal welfare. Following a tour of factory farms in southern Minnesota, Dr. Johnson joined forces with other faculty members at St. Catherine University and Sonja Trom Eayrs. Sonja's parents are currently involved in a pending appeal before the Minnesota Court of Appeals which challenges installation of the 11th swine factory farm within a three-mile radius of the Trom family farm in rural Dodge County.

Join panelists Dr. Jeff Johnson (Philosophy, St. Catherine University), Dr. Colleen Carpenter (Theology, Sister Mona Riley Endowed Chair of Humanities, St. Catherine University), Sonja Trom Eayrs (attorney and farmer's daughter) and Chris Peterson, Independent Pig Farmer and Socially Responsible Agricultural Project Associate) for an informative and compelling discussion.

Sponsors of the event include:

Clean Water Action Minnesota

Environment Minnesota

Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy

The Humane Society of the United States

Socially Responsible Agriculture Project

Minnesota Public Interest Research Group

Midwest Organic and Sustainable Education Service

The Sustainable Farming Association

Compassionate Action for Animals

Birchwood Café

People's Food Co-op

Change Food

Earth Dance Farm

Dodge County Concerned Citizens

Celeste's Dream Young Adult Spirituality

Minnesota Peacebuilding Leadership Institute

Saint Mary's University of Minnesota

Cascade Meadow Wetlands and Environmental Science Center

Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet & Consociates Justice Commission

Center for Earth Spirituality & Rural Ministry, School Sisters of Notre Dame in Mankato