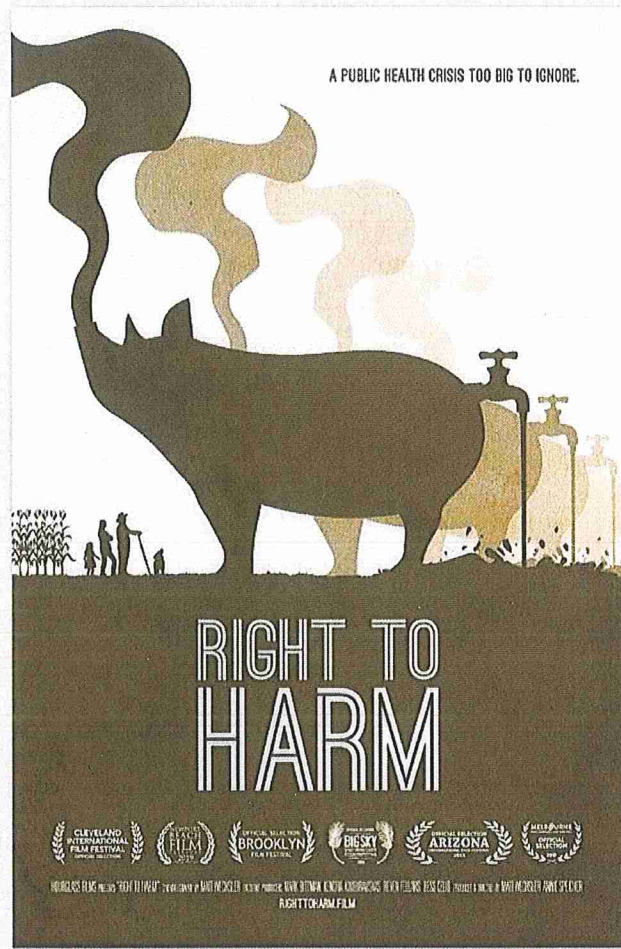


RIGHT TO HARM

The heartbreaking struggle of families & communities

PLAYING AT THE
GRAY DUCK THEATRE
619 6TH AVE. NW
ROCHESTER,
MINN. 55901

MARCH 13, 5:00 PM
MARCH 14, 7:00 PM
MARCH 15, 4:00 PM
& 6:30 PM



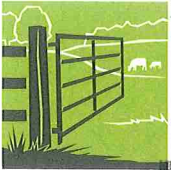
TICKETS: \$10/PERSON
\$8 TO THE THEATER AND \$2 WILL BE DONATED
TO DODGE COUNTY CONCERNED CITIZENS

We are pleased to announce special screenings of Right to Harm, a film that portrays the riveting stories of families across America who are victims of the past 50 years of agricultural consolidation and the rise of industrialized livestock production. Fed up with the lack of regulation, these disenfranchised citizens have banded together to demand justice from their legislators as their health, homes and communities are impacted by factory farms.

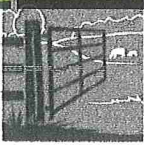


Questions?
Send an email to
info@dodgeecc.org





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180 East Main St, Box 130
Lewiston, MN 55952
507-523-3366

MINNEAPOLIS OFFICE
821 East 35th St, #200
Minneapolis, MN 55407
612-722-6377

MONTEVIDEO OFFICE
117 South 1st St
Montevideo, MN 56265
320-269-2105

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Montevideo, MN 56265
320-269-2105

FARM CRISIS FORUM

Pulling Together, Moving Forward

Feb 29th in Mankato, Minnesota

Agenda

11:30--Registration & Lunch

12:00--Welcome and Introduction--Kathleen Deutz, Marshall, MN

12:15—Land Stewardship Project Farm Crisis Statement

- Jim Vanderpol, Kerkhoven, MN
- Bonnie Haugen, Canton, MN
- Allen Deutz, Marshall, MN
- Madonna Sellner, Sleepy Eye, MN
- Paul Sobocinski, Wabasso, MN

12:45—Presentation of LSP Farm Crisis Petition

1:00—Response from Commissioner of Agriculture Thom Petersen, and Attorney General Keith Ellison

1:15—Land Stewardship Action Fund—Megan Jekot, Director, LSAF

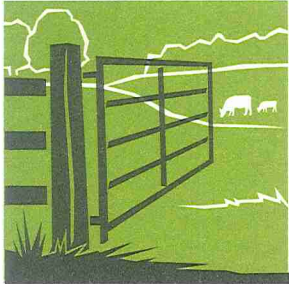
1:20—Table Discussion

2:00--Question and Answer with Keith Ellison and Thom Peterson

2:55—Moving Forward—Matthew Sheets, LSP Farm Crisis Organizer

Adjourn

Yes, I want to support keeping the land & people together!



**LAND
STEWARDSHIP
PROJECT**

MONTHLY PLEDGES

\$10 \$15 \$25 \$50 \$100 Other amount \$ _____ per month

Pledges greatly strengthen LSP's work by providing reliable income to advance stewardship while keeping costs down. As a pledger, your membership is always current. To pledge, choose an amount and fill out the payment information below.

ONE-TIME DONATIONS

\$35 \$60 \$100 \$250 \$500 \$ _____

Membership dues and gifts of all sizes have an impact and are critical to LSP's success. Please enclose a check or fill out the payment information below and check the one-time gift box.

Thank you for your contribution. Your donation is tax deductible.

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Phone _____

E-mail: _____

Are you a farmer? Yes No

If so, what do you raise? _____

Do you own farmland? Yes No

Donate to the Land Stewardship Project (one-time gift)

Please accept my donation (check enclosed) or use the credit card information provided below to make a one-time gift of \$ _____

Pledge Monthly to the Land Stewardship Project

Please accept my monthly pledge of \$ _____ per month.

Start my pledge on _____ (MM/DD/YY)

Please Use My:

Checking Account (attach voided check for pledge only)

Visa MC Discover

_____ Card Number

_____ Exp. date

Signature _____

I authorize LSP to process debit entries from my account. I understand I am free to discontinue my ongoing gift at any time by contacting LSP. A fee may be charged in the case of insufficient funds.

612-722-6377 • www.landstewardshipproject.org

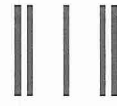
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Land Stewardship Project

Advancing Stewardship ♦ Building Community ♦ Organizing for Justice

Creating Change from the Ground Up





Thank
you for
your
stamp!



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821 E 35TH ST STE 200
MINNEAPOLIS MN 55407-2102**





LAND
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PULLING TOGETHER MOVING FORWARD

LSP Statement on the Current Farm Crisis November 2019

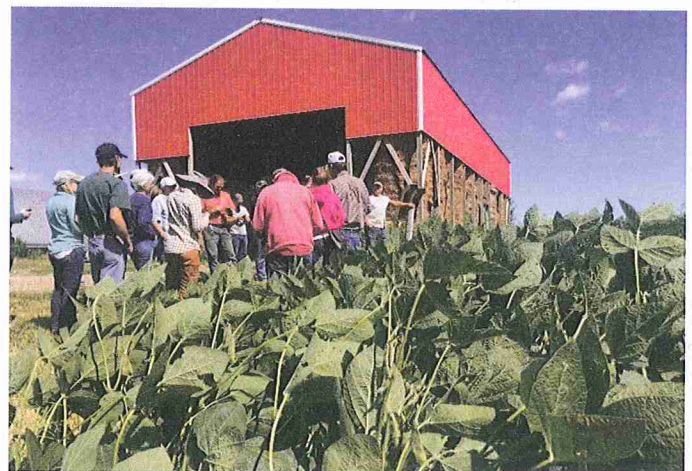
On September 7, 2019, thirty-seven Land Stewardship Project member-farmers and leaders came together in St. Peter, Minn., to discuss direct ways of addressing the current farm crisis. Farmers are facing an economic crisis that is entering its sixth year. Farm families are often unable to even earn back what it took to plant the crop, to raise the livestock, or to produce the milk that is their source of income. This unsustainable situation is severely undermining the foundation of independent farming and the communities it supports, as well as overall stewardship, fairness, and justice.

The pain of this crisis is not being felt by agribusiness and corporate interests that continue to make profits at the expense of farmers and rural communities. The fact is that there is money in agriculture, but farmers are not getting anywhere close to a fair share of the economic benefits being generated by the food they labor to produce on the land.

Some stark facts:

- The 2018 median farm income for U.S. farm households was **negative \$1,533**.
- For six years, **more than half of farmers and ranchers have lost money** on their crops or herds.
- 70% of the total income of farm families comes from **off-farm sources**.

Failure to address the destruction of farm-level profitability is not acceptable and is producing devastating results. The combined impact of these structural forces — left to play out without intervention from our elected representatives, our public officials, and farmers themselves — may very well lead to the extinction of the next wave of the kinds of small- to mid-sized farm operations, particularly family dairy farmers, that are the source of vitality for rural communities. Long-term food security and environmental stewardship require more farmers, not less, and stronger rural communities, not weaker ones.



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FROM OUR MINNESOTA GOVERNOR, LEGISLATURE AND ATTORNEY GENERAL WE DEMAND:

- 1) State officials must strengthen our Minnesota Farm Advocates program so farmers know their rights.** Minnesota needs to double the number of farm advocates to meet Minnesota farmers needs. This program puts farmers first and lets farmers know their rights when the bankers come for the farm and farm equipment. In addition, The Farmers' Legal Action Group (FLAG) needs funding to support the training of farm advocates and provide legal resources to farmers in financial trouble.
- 2) The Minnesota Attorney General's office must use its authority to investigate large farmer-owned cooperatives that have demonstrated by their policies and actions that they have turned their backs on the farmers who created them.** The Attorney General's office, in its investigation or in its recommendation for legislation, should address these immediate needs of family farmers:
 - Farm cooperatives must return to their original purpose that all family farmers be treated equally in the buying of farm inputs and the selling of farm products. No special deals for large producers.
 - No cooperative mergers or acquisitions should be allowed without all farmer members being allowed to vote.
- 3) Farmers need accessible opportunities to restructure loans.** The Minnesota Legislature should pass policy that covers the origination fee required of small- and mid-sized farmers who are in severe financial stress and thus are refinancing farm debt and obtaining guaranteed loans through the USDA Farm Service Agency.
- 4) A moratorium on massive dairies over 1,000 animal units.** The Governor must instruct the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) to pass a moratorium on issuing permits for construction of any dairy over 1,000 animal units until the water pollution threat posed by these large operations and the price-depressing effects of overproduction are both addressed.
- 5) Affordable healthcare for farmers and rural communities.** The Governor and Legislature must take bold and immediate steps to expand public healthcare coverage and directly help people facing unaffordable costs, poor coverage, and high deductibles on the private market.

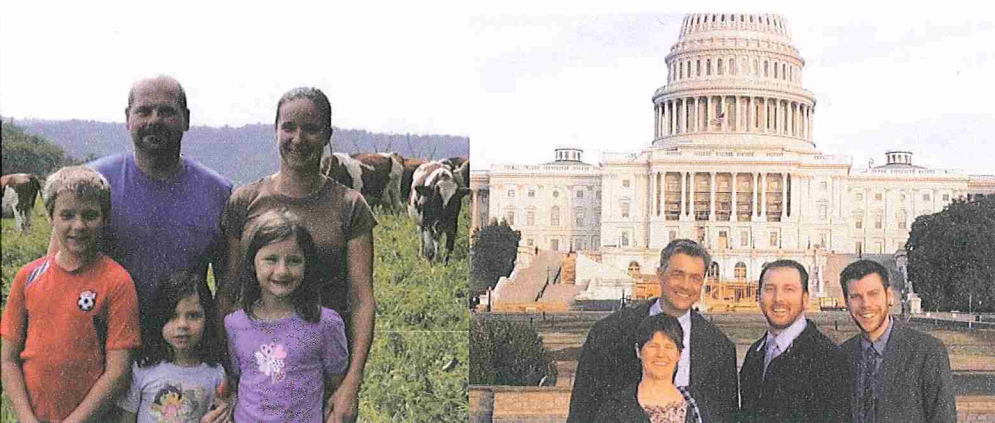


FROM OUR FEDERAL LEADERS WE DEMAND:

- 1) **End corporate mega-mergers.** All of our representatives in the U.S. Congress, and especially the ones who serve on the House and Senate agriculture committees, must take a stand and pass a moratorium on any pending corporate ag mergers, and address economic fairness within the Grain Inspection, Packers, and Stockyards Administration (GIPSA) and the broader regulatory authority related to anti-trust in agriculture.
- 2) **Establish a supply management system** for grain, with a loan rate at 95% of production costs.
- 3) **Implement short-term dairy relief and a long-term structural solution for small- and mid-sized dairies as proposed during the “Dairy Together” Roadshow in Greenwald, Minn., on April 29, 2019** (hosted by the National Farmers Organization and Wisconsin Farmers Union and co-hosted by Minnesota Farmers Union).
- 4) **Federal farm subsidies should have payment limits and should be tied to stewardship.** We should not have a system where 80% of farm payments go to 5% of the farmers.
- 5) **Enact Country of Origin Labeling**, which is missing in the current draft of the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement.
- 6) **The Farm Service Agency must offer 40-year fixed farmland loans** with below-market interest rates to those groups of beginning farmers who are at a significant competitive disadvantage when it comes to accessing land — women, farmers of color, veterans, and farmers with limited capital resources.

Some root causes of this farm crisis are clear and agreed upon:

- Farmers not getting a fair price for what they produce or a fair share of the food dollar.
- Corporate monopolies exercising their extractive nature on both sides of the farm produce/input equation, along with the USDA's disregard for fulfilling its role as enforcer of farm economic fairness.
- Cooperatives asserting power over their members rather than power for them.
- Unaffordable cost of healthcare for farmers and other self-employed people.



To get involved in LSP's farm crisis organizing work contact:

Paul Sobocinski • 507-430-1509 • pauls@landstewardshipproject.org

Tom Nuessmeier • 507-995-3541 • tomn@landstewardshipproject.org

Matthew Sheets • 320-766-4395 • mshheets@landstewardshipproject.org

FARMERS AND ALLIES MUST UNIFY AND SPEAK OUT

It is time farmers receive a fair price for the products they produce, and commodity groups and farm organizations need to refocus their policy initiatives on the importance of keeping family farmers on the land. To bring about such initiatives, farmers and their allies must unify and amplify their voices. Solutions to the farm crisis must start on the farm.

Farmers must start listening to each other, rather than agribusiness leaders, whose interest is not the interest of farmers or the communities they support. Farmers and their allies must unite around a common cause, and work to advance their own personal and community self-economic interest, as well as further the interest of farmers beyond their own communities who represent a diversity of farming approaches and a diversity of backgrounds. LSP believes that racial justice is deeply connected to economic justice for farmers and rural people, which is why we're committed to engaging in racial justice work, alongside our allies, as we address the ongoing farm crisis.

This is the source of our strength, our resilience, our solutions, and our power.

WE MUST TAKE ACTION TOGETHER

Addressing the disaster that is decimating farming communities will require an increasing number of community meetings and actions small and large.

We must build the power of farmer and rural community voices to the level required to make effective demands of our elected representatives and public officials, and get the concrete actions required to meet the severity of this current economic crisis.

The Land Stewardship Project is prepared, along with our allies, to lead and support the groundswell of action needed to bring about an equitable farm economy grounded in family farm viability, land stewardship, and community — both in this immediate time of farm crisis, and as a foundation for the future.

Please, let us know you stand with us and are prepared to act.

Sign and share LSP's Farm Crisis Petition online:

<https://landstewardshipproject.org/farmcrisispetition>

**Or sign below, clip and return to LSP at 821 E. 35th St. Minneapolis, MN 55407.
We will be in touch with you on how we can pull together and move forward.**

Yes, I agree with this statement and stand with the Land Stewardship Project in demanding bold action on the farm crisis from our elected leaders.

Name: _____

Full Address: _____

Phone: (H) _____ (M) _____ E-mail: _____

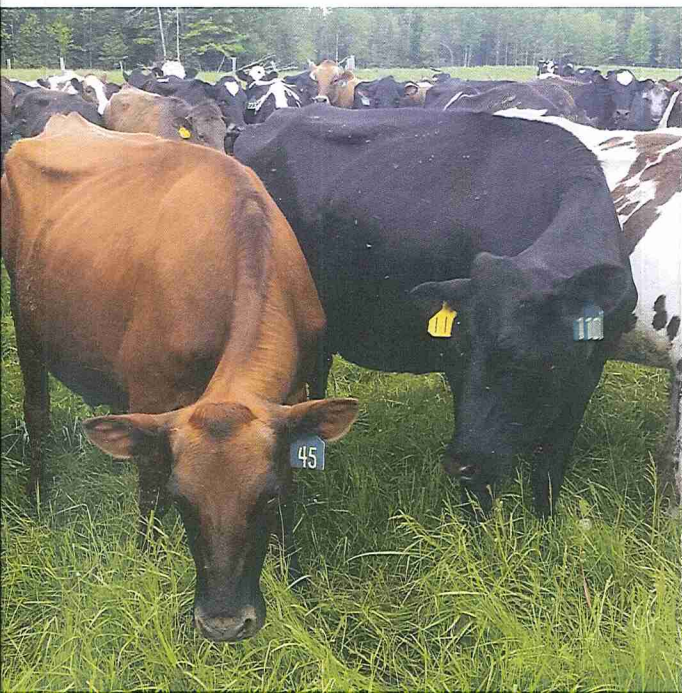
Do You Farm? _____ If So, What Do You Raise? _____

WHY MANAGED GRAZING?

Managed Grazing is a sustainable farming method in which the majority of farm acres are planted to perennial pasture and livestock are rotated through paddocks of high quality grasses and legumes that are allowed to rest and regrow.

Modern managed-grazing systems

- ◆ **Reduce Costs for Start-Up Farms**
- ◆ **Utilize Advanced Technology and Custom Herd Genetics**
- ◆ **Build Plant, Soil, and Water Resources**
- ◆ **Improve Animal Health and Longevity**
- ◆ **Maximize Long-Term Productive Capacity**
- ◆ **Produce High Quality Milk for Organic, Value Added, and Conventional Markets**
- ◆ **Improve Farm Profitability**



Dairy Grazing Apprenticeship is a 501c3 non-profit organization and its training program is a National Apprenticeship registered with the U.S. Department of Labor Employment and Training Administration.

DGA was developed with funding support from USDA-NIFA Beginning Farmer and Rancher Program and from other generous foundations, sponsors, and individuals.

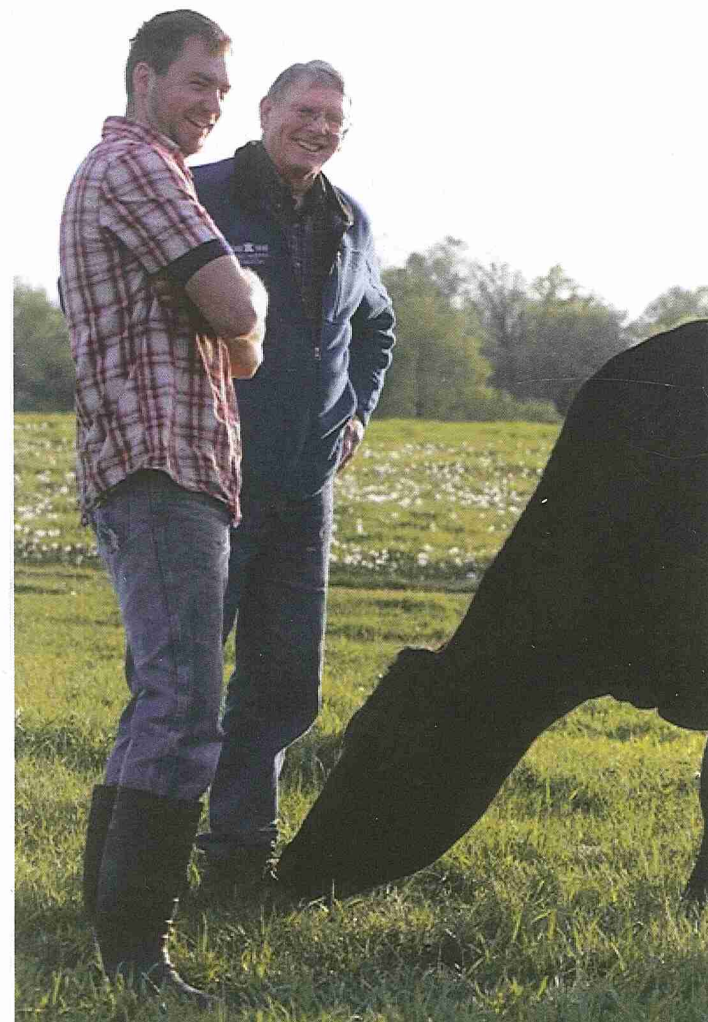
Visit <https://www.dga-national.org/Donate> to find out how you can get involved and support new farmer training.

Contact DGA
info@dga-national.org
or 715-560-0389

DAIRY  GRAZING
APPRENTICESHIP

DAIRY  GRAZING
APPRENTICESHIP

your future is THE future of dairy



DGA-NATIONAL.ORG

A New Career Pathway for Aspiring Dairy Farmers



DAIRY GRAZING APPRENTICESHIP (DGA)

is the first formal Apprenticeship for farming in the nation. DGA links current and aspiring dairy farmers and provides a structure of support for the transfer of knowledge, skills, and farms from one generation to the next.

There is no way I could have started a dairy farm without this program—DGA is giving me the knowledge, experience, and connections I need to turn a dream into reality.

- Brian Klinge, Apprentice



Brian and Katie Klinge are moving onto their own farm with their young family in central Wisconsin.

From the day we started working on a three year plan to transfer the farm, I told my Apprentice, Brandon, "You're not just my hired man; you're my partner."

- Glenn Harder, Master Dairy Grazier

The classes and pasture walks really helped to build a supportive network of Apprentices. We're still friends as we move on to the next stages of our careers.

- Gabby Rojas, Journey Dairy Grazier

I appreciate the structure of Apprenticeship for developing my best employees—I want to grow the organic and grass-based dairy industry and improve my business at the same time.

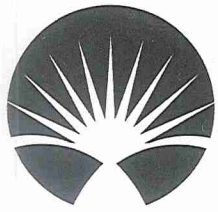
- Dan Olson, Master Dairy Grazier

DGA Can Help You Reach Your Farming Goals

- ◆ FULL-TIME EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING OVER TWO YEARS
- ◆ OPPORTUNITIES TO ADVANCE INTO MANAGEMENT AND OWNERSHIP
- ◆ RELATED ONLINE CLASSES
- ◆ NETWORKING AND PEER-TO-PEER LEARNING
- ◆ FINANCIAL PLANNING SERVICES
- ◆ PROVEN MODELS FOR EQUITY EARNING, FARM START-UP AND FARM TRANSFER
- ◆ VETERANS BENEFITS ACCEPTED
- ◆ ACCESS TO INVESTOR CAPITAL

Now accepting applications for Apprentices and Masters in multiple states

Apply online and find out more
<https://www.dga-national.org/>

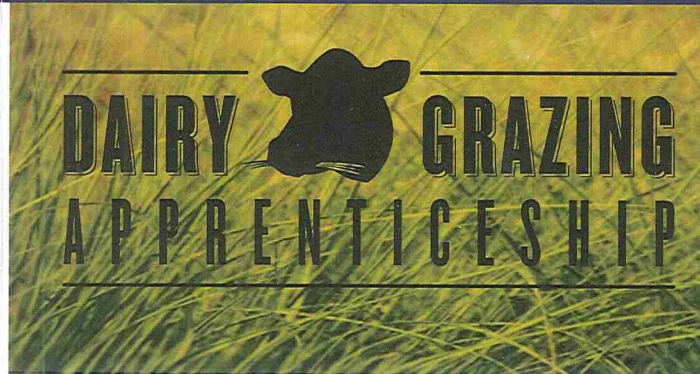


MANAGED GRAZING

INNOVATION CENTER

In 2018 Dairy Grazing Apprenticeship launched its own online school, Managed Grazing Innovation Center, which offers custom classes designed specifically to accommodate and enhance the on-farm training of Apprenticeship.

- Dairy Cattle Health & Wellness
- Milk Quality
- Dairy Nutrition, Feed & Feeding
- Soils & Water Management
- Farm Business Management
- Managed Grazing Systems for Dairy Cattle



Why begin your path to farm business ownership with Dairy Grazing Apprenticeship?

As a veteran, you bring a skill set that mirrors those needed to succeed in the dairy industry as an entrepreneur and leader in agriculture.

- Veterans have the proven ability to learn new skills and concepts.
- Veterans understand that teamwork grows out of a responsibility to one's colleagues.
- Veterans understand the rigors of tight schedules and limited resources.
- Veterans are aware of pertinent international and technical trends that impact industry.

We are looking to train the next generation of dairy farmers and business owners.

To learn more contact our Veterans' Liaison: Matthew Keesling

matthew@dga-national.org

715-623-6915


Visit WWW.DGA-NATIONAL.ORG



FARMING ISN'T JUST A JOB



...IT'S A WAY OF LIFE.

DAIRY  GRAZING
APPRENTICESHIP

DAIRY GRAZING APPRENTICESHIP (DGA)

is the first formal Apprenticeship for farming in the nation. DGA brings current and aspiring dairy farmers together and provides a structure of support for the transfer of knowledge, skills, and farms to the next generation.

APPRENTICESHIP is a proven work-based educational system that has prepared people for skilled occupations for more than a century.

MANAGED GRAZING reduces the use of off-farm inputs, restores water and soil resources, and improves animal health and farm profitability.

Veteran Friendly Organization



DGA is designed to help ensure success for transitioning service members and other beginning dairy farmers. Program completion meets the educational and experience requirements to apply for a beginning farmer loan through the USDA's Farm Services Agency.



"Dairy farming provides the lifestyle we want for our family and allows me to continue to serve the nation by producing high quality food"

**- Matthew Keesling
Dairy Grazing Apprentice and
U.S. Army Veteran**

How Can DGA Help Veterans?

- Fulltime employment and training over a two-year period
- Coaching and support during Master Grazier selection process
- \$4,500 stipend paid in three installments
- Dedicated website for state and local veterans' resources
- Financial planning resources during Apprenticeship and after graduation
- Organized veteran activities outside of DGA
- Use of Educational benefits or VOC Rehab
- Opportunities to advance in management or ownership



EXPLORE OUR WEBSITE TO LEARN MORE! IF DGA LOOKS LIKE A GOOD FIT FOR YOU, APPLY ONLINE.

www.dga-national.org



**DAIRY GRAZING
APPRENTICESHIP**

Did you know we offer...

INTERNSHIPS

DGA Internship Details:

- Farmer hosting the intern must be an approved DGA Master.
- Internship may be no more than 480 hours with a minimum of 250 hours.
- Interns must be paid a minimum of \$8 per hour (or the prevailing minimum wage in the state)
- Internship can start at any time of the year.
- Interns can receive both DGA related instruction credits (when they apply) and college credits if they are doing the internship through the university they are attending.
- Interns must be 18 years old, unless they enter the program via Youth

*Need an internship to
complete a college course or
want to learn more before
committing to a full
Apprenticeship?*

Apply for a DGA Internship!

**Our approved training
farms are ready to help
you with your future
farming goals!**



TO LEARN MORE VISIT:

www.dga-national.org/participate



**MANAGED
GRAZING**
INNOVATION CENTER

DAIRY  **GRAZING**
APPRENTICESHIP

Dairy Farm Structure Management Plan

It's Time We Leveled the Playing Field for American Dairy Farms of All Sizes

USDA data show that production costs are higher for family-sized farms than for very large dairies. Because of this production cost difference, a price high enough to make family farms profitable can induce a flood of milk from very large farms. On the other hand, a price that makes very large farms profitable can be too low to stem the loss of family-sized farms.

In other words, a policy that provides opportunities for dairy farms of all sizes must have more than one price. Overcoming the production cost imbalance among dairy farms requires a higher pay price for milk produced on smaller farms.

Our program proposal is so simple we can say it in a single sentence: Establish a national Federal Milk Marketing Order with a \$4.00 per cwt price adjuster for up to one million pounds of monthly production for every dairy farm in the country.

THREE BIG ADVANTAGES

1. The program preserves farmer freedom and does not tell any farmer how many cows can be on his or her farm. All farmers, including those newly entering the business, compete under the same payment system without having to purchase quota. Every farm, regardless of size, gets the \$4.00 price adjuster for up to one million pounds of production per month. Every farm, large and small, is free to operate as they see fit in response to price signals sent by the program.
2. The program does not increase costs for consumers or taxpayers. Instead, it reduces the cost of production difference between family-sized farms and very large farms in a way similar to FMMO procedures that account for different class prices.
3. Some farms with production higher than the cutoff will also benefit from the program. Why? The higher price for the first million pounds of production is blended with the lower price for production in excess of the cut off level. The resulting pay prices can be higher or lower than prices paid without the program.

TIME IS NOT ON OUR SIDE

We must do more than stand by and wring our hands as independent family-sized dairy farms disappear at such a staggering rate. Nothing will change until we account for the cost of production differences among dairies. Time is not on our side. Getting a new policy in place requires urgent action among dairy farmers across the country.

Please join us in crafting a dairy policy that levels the playing field for all American dairy farms.

BY HARWOOD D. SCHAFER
AND DARYLL E. RAY

A recent article confirmed what we have already known about the market facilitation payments made to compensate farmers for the loss of soybean sales to China as the result of the current trade dispute; a large portion of the funds went to a very narrow slice of farming operations.

That, in itself, is not surprising given the fact that a couple hundred thousand farms, out of 2 million, produce more than half of the agricultural production in the U.S. The market facilitation payments were paid out on bushels produced and this relatively small number of farms grew a large portion of those soybean bushels.

Because of the current design of farm programs which are based on production, the larger the production, the larger the potential payments. This is true for crop insurance, the Agricultural Risk Coverage program, the Price Loss Coverage program, and the current ad hoc Market Facilitation payment program. As long as the programs are based on "payments per bushel-produced" that will be the result.

To level the playing field a little and inject the perception of fairness into the process, Congress has approved a \$125,000 cap on direct government payments for farm programs. That way there is a limit on the amount of payments the largest farms can receive. With some farm operations being owned by multiple related individuals over several generations, farmers are free to adjust the accounting structure of the farm to maintain the smoothest operation while minimizing tax consequences and maximizing government payment opportunities.

When Congress changes the laws, farmers simply go to their tax attorneys and accountants to identify ways to restructure their operation to minimize taxes and maximize government program payments. While we may not like that, there is no way to avoid the problem.

We may think that as farms get larger, they become more efficient and should need fewer tax and program payment benefits, but it is nearly impossible to devise a set of laws to achieve that goal.

At the same time, we have no problem with program and tax auditors cracking down on people who are involved in farming "in name only." If they do not substantially contribute to the farm operation, they should not receive payments.

As long as our farm programs rely on payments, we will have creative accountants and lawyers who will find the best ways to restructure an operation to maximize income which includes government payments.

But that assumes that payments are the only way to write agricultural policy.

A supply management program with

With supply management we only pay for the production that is isolated from the market and the storage costs for that production, and in the end, most of those costs are recouped when the commodity is sold during a short-production year.

a loan rate at 95 percent of the cost of production for corn and at the historic ratio to corn for other crops would eliminate that problem because government payments would no longer be the organizing principle of commodity programs.

The money that farmers receive would come from the marketplace. Any surplus crops that are forfeited to the Commodity Credit Corporation in payment of the 9-month marketing loans would most likely come from areas with lower crop prices and higher basis costs and will affect only a small slice of all crop farmers.

And when the time comes to institute an acreage reduction program to balance out supply and demand, a bid process can be instituted where the bids are based on the environmental benefits the farmer will provide on that land. Thus the payments are paid for services rendered to society in the form of making improvements to the environment.

At that point the criteria are air, land and water focused and who can provide the greatest benefits environmentally, so society gets the best bang for the buck.

These programs are also less expensive than current programs because we are not making payments on every bushel, bale and hundredweight of production.

With supply management we only pay for the production that is isolated from the market and the storage costs for that production, and in the end, most of those costs are recouped when the commodity is sold during a short-production year. In terms of environmental benefits and food security, society gets something for the money it pays.

Until we move away from payment-based farm programs, we will always have the problem that a few get the bulk of the payments.

Dr. Harwood D. Schaffer is an adjunct research assistant professor at the University of Tennessee. Dr. Daryll E. Ray is an emeritus professor at the University of Tennessee.

Farmers who
produce the most
receive the most

HF 3739
02/24/2020

Farm Crisis Loan Origination Fee Grant Program - House version

Authored by Lippert, Hamilton, Lueck, Poppe, Gunther and others

Bill was read for the first time and referred to Agriculture and Food Finance and Policy Division

- 1.1 A bill for an act
- 1.2 relating to agriculture; appropriating money for grants to farmers for certain loan
- 1.3 origination fees.
- 1.4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MINNESOTA:
- 1.5 Section 1. **FARM CRISIS LOAN ORIGINATION FEE GRANT PROGRAM.**
- 1.6 (a) \$880,000 in fiscal year 2020 is appropriated from the general fund to the commissioner
- 1.7 of agriculture for grants to eligible farmers who have been approved for farm debt
- 1.8 restructuring loans guaranteed by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA),
- 1.9 Farm Service Agency or issued under a loan program administered by the Rural Finance
- 1.10 Authority. The commissioner must award an eligible farmer a grant in an amount equal to
- 1.11 the loan origination fee amount required for the farmer to obtain the USDA, Farm Service
- 1.12 Agency guaranteed loan or Rural Finance Authority program loan.
- 1.13 (b) For purposes of this section, "eligible farmer" means an individual who regularly
- 1.14 participates in physical labor or operations management in the individual's farming operation
- 1.15 and files "Schedule F" as part of the person's annual Form 1040 filing with the United States
- 1.16 Internal Revenue Service or a family farm organized under Minnesota Statutes, section
- 1.17 500.24, if the individual or family farm:
- 1.18 (1) has a total net worth of less than \$800,000 in calendar year 2020; and
- 1.19 (2) is either in mediation proceedings under Minnesota Statutes, chapter 583, or has
- 1.20 received a mediation notice under Minnesota Statutes, section 583.26, subdivision 1,
- 1.21 paragraph (a).
- 2.1 (c) The commissioner must give first priority to grant applicants who are currently in
- 2.2 mediation under Minnesota Statutes, chapter 583, and must give second priority to grant
- 2.3 applicants who have received a mediation notice under Minnesota Statutes, section 583.26,
- 2.4 subdivision 1, paragraph (a).
- 2.5 (d) The amount appropriated under this section is onetime and is available until June
- 2.6 30, 2023.
- 2.7 (e) The commissioner may use up to ten percent of the amount appropriated under this
- 2.8 section to administer the grant program.
- 2.9 **EFFECTIVE DATE.** This section is effective the day following final enactment.

FAIR WAGE MILK

fairwagemilk@aol.com

PART 1

\$30.00/cwt minimum pay price for the 1st million lbs (many have suggested it should be 1.5 million lbs.) production on every licensed dairy farm in the country

The \$30.00 price indexed to total economic cost and adjusted at least every 3 years.

Enforced as a mandate, similar to minimum wage

No taxpayer supported programs

All producers treated the same

No quota or production limits – if producers want to oversupply the market and push margins lower, they are free to do so, without driving producers out of business that are not increasing production

1 million lb target selected for easy math.

Some have suggested 1.5 million to be closer to a typical 80 cow holstein herd

The 1 million lb target x the number of licensed dairy producers accounts for approximately 15% of the milk marketed

I do not think the target should be too high so as not to influence the remaining market significantly

The current pricing structure including volume premiums only promotes over supplying the market. There is no price benefit to reducing production

Under this plan producers would see an immediate price increase with any production decrease. This difference would be marginal for large farms but significant for small farms, allowing them to maintain herd size and stay viable.

This price structure would also make cash flows viable and bankable for entry level producers

PART 2

Give tax credits to coop's and processors that purchase a minimum of 15% FAIR WAGE MILK to equalize the playing field with those that don't

These tax credits would be indexed to the amount of FWM they handle.

Ex). A coop that purchases 30% FWM would receive a 30% tax credit (or higher depending on what it takes to level the playing field)

This portion requires development by those in that sector of the dairy industry.

PART 3

Allow retailers to label dairy products FWM if it meets a minimum % by content from FWM (at least 15%)

Give retailers tax credits similar to processors based on % FWM to encourage product usage in the dairy case

WI dairy farm average:

Kota Minegishi, PhD

Department of Animal Science

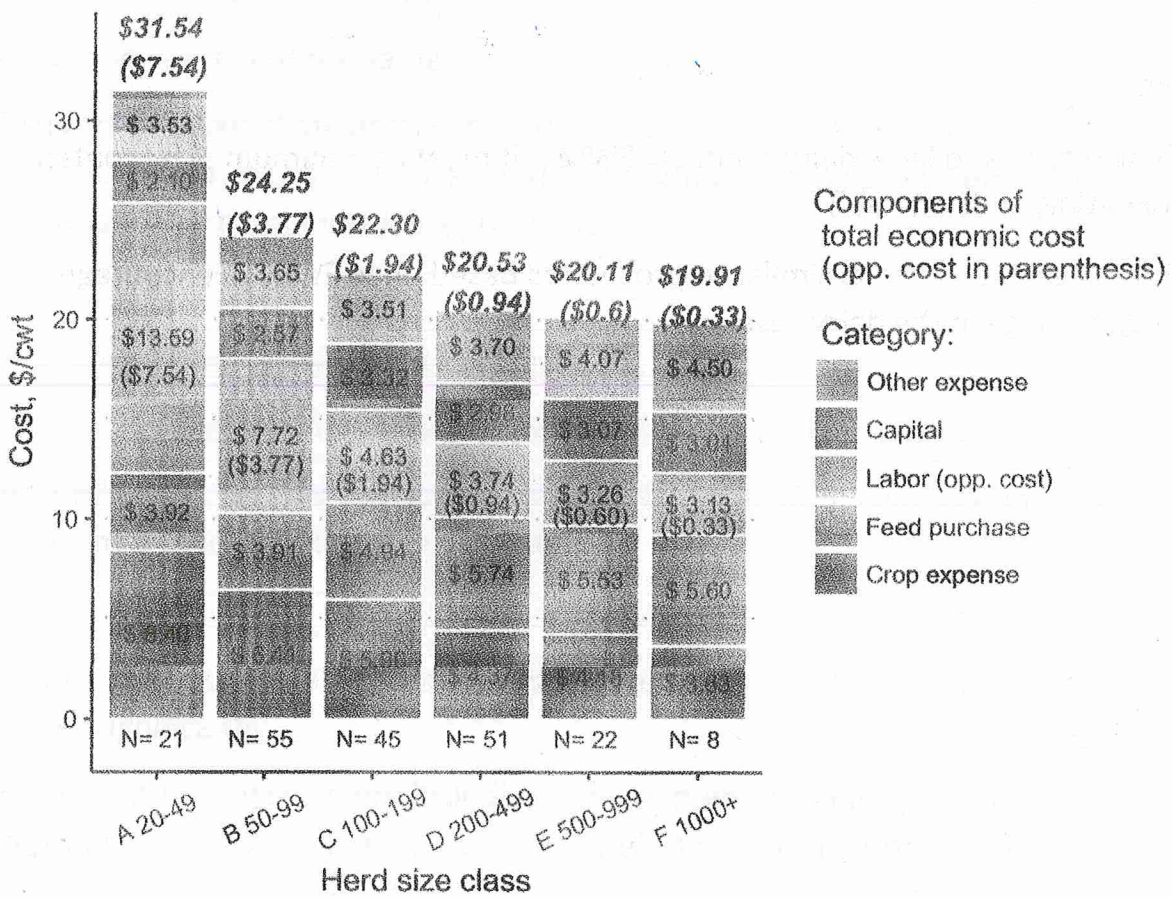
University of Minnesota, Twin Cities

Office: Haecker Hall 265E

Office Phone: (612) 624 7455

Cell: (240) 898 7781

Email: Kota@umn.edu



You are invited to attend the Dodge County Corn and Soybean Growers Annual Banquet

Wednesday, March 18, 2020
Dodge Center American Legion
401 Hwy St W, Dodge Center, MN 55927

Complimentary Lunch at 11:45 am
Annual Meeting, speaker and door prizes to follow

Speaker: John Kriesel
"Still Standing. Still Smiling"

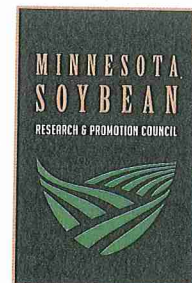
In 2006, Kriesel was nearly blown to shreds by a 200 pound roadside bomb in the parched sands of Iraq, but battlefield angels in army uniforms kept him breathing long enough to reach a field hospital. He died three times and was shocked back to life. Somehow, he survived through four hospitals, 35 surgeries and months of recovery. He lost both legs and suffered numerous other major injuries, but it was the loss of two close friends that hurt the most.

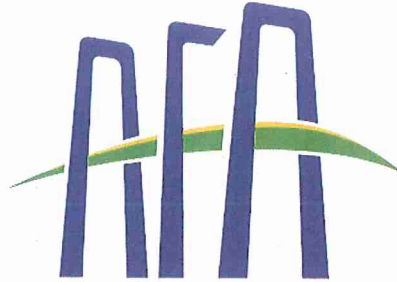
The person who was not supposed to survive and was told he probably would be in a wheelchair the rest of his life, walked out of Walter Reed Army Medical Center after nine months. Working with author Jim Kosmo, Kriesel reveals his motivational story in "STILL STANDING: The Story of SSG John Kriesel," winner of eight national book awards.

Questions contact Pete Henslin 507-421-6781.



Sponsored by your Dodge
County Corn and Soybean
Growers and their checkoffs.





INFORMATION RELEASE

Date: January 10, 2020

Contact: Jon Zuk

(507) 259-5168

jjzuk@landolakes.com

Dodge County Corn and Soybean Growers Announce Agriculture Scholarship Availability

The Dodge County Corn and Soybean Growers are collaborating with Agriculture Future of America (AFA) to support an agricultural scholarship program. AFA is a 501(c)3 corporation dedicated to helping support higher education and leader development of future agriculture producers and rural business leaders.

The **AFA Leader and Academic Scholarship is \$4,450**, consisting of a \$3,200 academic scholarship. The additional \$1,250 will sponsor *Dodge County* recipient to the AFA Leaders Conference in Kansas City the November of the scholarship year.

In addition to the AFA Leader and Academic Scholarship, the Dodge County Corn and Soybean Growers will **also be offering two separate scholarships (One-time value: \$1000 and \$750)** to student individuals who are members or whose parents/relatives are members of the Dodge County Corn and Soybean Growers. Student memberships are available at mncorn.org and mnsoybean.org. To become a member or to receive more information about our scholarships, please contact Jon Zuk at (phone) 507-259-5168 or (email) jjzuk@landolakes.com.

AFA's objective is to work with communities to create scholarships for high school graduates entering college in the agricultural field. For more information about AFA, visit www.agfuture.org. **Eligibility requirements** for the Dodge County Community Scholarships include Blooming Prairie, Hayfield, Kasson-Mantorville, and Triton graduating seniors and currently attending college students.

We hope you will help us promote these scholarships to young men and women interested in agriculture. To apply please visit www.agfuture.org/scholarships to fill out an application and submit an essay. Student applications are due by March 11, 2020.

Apply here for all three scholarships:

www.agfuture.org/scholarships

Applications are due March 11, 2020

Agriculture Future of America
PO Box 414838 | Kansas City, MO 64141



LAND STEWARDSHIP PROJECT

LEWISTON OFFICE
180 East Main St, Box 130
Lewiston, MN 55952
507-523-3366

MINNEAPOLIS OFFICE
821 East 35th St, # 200
Minneapolis, MN 55407
612-722-6377

MONTEVIDEO OFFICE
117 South 1st St
Montevideo, MN 56265
320-269-2105

MPCA's Environmental Review & Feedlot Divisions Are BROKEN. Commissioner Bishop has the Power to Make it Right for Our Rural Residents Regarding a Winona County Factory Farm

Dear Friend,

The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency's (MPCA) Commissioner Laura Bishop must hear from rural residents that we are confident she is the right person, in the right role at the right time to correct harmful decisions made by her predecessor John Linc Stine regarding Daley Farm's proposal to expand its mega-dairy in Winona County. She has acknowledged the need to restore the public's trust in this agency. While we appreciate that she has extended the public comment period by 15 days, until March 6; this situation must be made right, **NOW**.

Daley's mega-dairy is already one of the biggest in Minnesota and this proposal would expand it by 3,000 cows to 4,628 head, in other words, from 2,275 animal units (AUs) to 5,968 AUs. Through its county zoning ordinances, Winona County set an animal unit cap of 1,500 AUs so that no one enterprise could take more than its fair share of water in this sensitive karst geology region or burden the community with excessive waste and costs.

As MPCA Commissioner, Stine denied the need for an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for Daley Farm's proposal and granted an individual National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit. Southeastern Minnesota's sensitive karst region is riddled with nitrate-laden drinking water. Communities in the region are not only having to consider "potential" threats to the environment that sustains them, they are already living with contaminated water and in some cases, poor air quality that worsens or threatens health conditions for neighbors. Stine's refusal to acknowledge this in his decision making defies logic and the letter and intent of the Minnesota Environmental Protection Act (MEPA).

Findings of Fact from the Department of Natural Resources (DNR), information from karst expert Dr. E. Calvin Alexander, along with over 500 comments, as well as factual data and concerns submitted by the public asking for an EIS were inadequately addressed. Stine's decisions made a mockery of the agency's mission to "protect and improve the environment and human health" and its duty to abide by Minnesota statutes. From Minn. Statute 4410.1700, Subp. 7. **Criteria:** "to decide whether a project has the potential for significant environmental effects" must consider type, extent and reversibility of environmental effects as well as cumulative potential effects.

When the Minnesota Court of Appeals overturned the MPCA's negative declaration for an EIS, it was recognizing that a public agency must hold factory farms accountable to the land and rural communities. It also recognized the climate change implications of concentrating thousands of cows in one place, where the manure they produce would be stored in an earthen-sided lagoon. The court was correct in noting that the MPCA was remiss in not considering greenhouse-gas (GHG) emissions when it conducted its environmental review. But, the Court's customary "deference to the agency as expert" on all other points in this case, fails the public's interest.

TAKE ACTION – LETTERS MUST ARRIVE NO LATER THAN MARCH 6: Write a note today to Commissioner Laura Bishop using the enclosed paper and envelope. A personal note from you as an LSP member delivers a powerful message. Comments **MUST BE RECEIVED BY THE MPCA BY 4:30 p.m. on March 6**. You can email comments to the MPCA's Kim Grosenheider: kim.grosenheider@state.mn.us; call 651-757-2170 with questions. For optimal impact:

- Write in your own words as you cite specific facts of this case that are most meaningful to you.
- Make it personal – share a bit of your experience - as LSP member, farmer, rural resident, etc.
- Ask for an EIS on the greenhouse gas supplement and the entire project – or ask the MPCA to deny permitting.



The Bottom Line:

- An industrial-scale animal factory is **NOT EXEMPT** from being ordered to undergo in-depth environmental review through an EIS. (Minn. Statute 4410.4600 Subp. 19)
- The EAW's recommendations are inadequate, inaccurate, and incomplete because, as stated, MPCA can't "conduct a full GHG life-cycle analysis." (Supplement to EAW, 6C, last paragraph) This is the trigger for an EIS. (Minn. Statute 4410.1700, Subp.2a. **Insufficient Information.** Staff from MPCA's environmental review and feedlot division were ill-prepared with scant, and in some cases misleading information at their public information meeting in Lewiston on Feb. 4. Community members asked, "Why are you spending time and our taxes on this supplemental EAW when you don't have enough information AND this project can't be permitted in Winona County due to the 1,500-animal unit cap? EIS or deny."
- "Estimates of potential emissions" are unsubstantiated. We don't know the baseline factors being used to make the calculations given that variables such as weather events, humidity, and temperature will affect potential emissions and the capacity of the proposers to meet the requirement of the EAW.
- Faulty underlying assumptions: "The Project will release air and odor emissions typically associated with a dairy farm" (Supplement to EAW, 6A). Around 86% of dairy farms in Minnesota have fewer than 200 cows. This expansion would make this mega-dairy 9 to 23 times bigger than the typical Minnesota dairy.
- Daley Farms is, and has been out of compliance with state regulations for run-off and other issues, with violations filed by the MPCA's feedlot division that have gone unenforced over 22 years.
- Recommendations meant to control greenhouse gasses are vague and not maintainable. For instance, consider the requirement that "Daley will evaluate weather conditions, primarily wind speed/direction and humidity, before manure application to minimize impacts to neighbors and the public." The Daley operation will not monitor about 42% of the acreage receiving manure, since the EAW only covers Daley's land.

Read the brief EAW greenhouse gas supplement at <https://www.pca.state.mn.us/sites/default/files/p-ear2-143k.pdf>. It's also helpful to review the Conclusion of Law and Order and Findings of Fact containing comments from experts and the public in 2018 at <https://www.pca.state.mn.us/sites/default/files/p-ear2-143b.pdf>.

Decades of political pressure by the global, national and state agriculture industry on local, state and national lawmakers, public agencies, decision makers and citizens themselves has weakened the public's power to protect its local economies, natural areas and biomes, access to clean, drinkable water, air quality, health and quality-of-life. Is this why MPCA staff have *never recommended* an EIS on a large factory farm? Courage means following Minnesota law to protect all of Minnesota's citizens, not just those seeking to create profit.

We need Commissioner Laura Bishop to use the power she has under MEPA to order an EIS or deny permitting on this massive animal factory proposal. Winona County's citizens along with all southeastern Minnesota's karst region communities are in a nitrate-induced drinking water crisis NOW. It's time to **STOP** pouring gasoline on a raging fire by ignoring the consequences we know are presented by this factory farm.

Sincerely,



Barb Sogn-Frank, Land Stewardship Project Organizer, 612-722-6377; bsognfrank@landstewardshipproject.org

'SHE'S OUR HERO!'

Temple Grandin's unique way of seeing the world and the animals in it make her a celebrity in two fields.

By Gene Johnston

We don't have a lot of A-list celebrities in the livestock industry, but we do have Temple Grandin.

The Colorado State University animal science professor has fundamentally changed the field of animal handling over her 40-year career as an educator and a consultant.

Her animal-friendly, gentler handling designs put emphasis on such things as curved chutes and solid corral fences.

Even staunch animal rights advocates respect Grandin. In fact, PETA gave her an award!

World-Renowned Scientist Dealing with Autism

What really puts her on the A-list is the fact that she is a world-renowned animal scientist while also dealing with her own autism. She didn't talk until she was almost 4 years old. She has spent a lifetime overcoming social awkwardness.

Her unique communication skills let her write and talk about autism and her visual way of thinking (like the animals). In her work with parents and educators, she gives hope to millions of special-needs kids. I can't tell you how many times I've heard a parent say, "Of course we know Temple Grandin. She's our hero."

HBO made a movie called *Temple Grandin* that you need to see – if you haven't already.

I recently had the opportunity to ask Grandin a few questions about her amazing life.

SF: How did you get into the field of animal behavior and handling?

TG: One of the people responsible was (the late) Stan Curtis, an agricultural engineer at the University of Illinois. The field of animal behavior was brand-new. He took me on as a graduate student. I was interested in what kinds of distractions made animals balk. I wondered why other people didn't see it the way I did.

SF: Is it true that in some of your research you lived with pigs and cows?

TG: My thesis was on pigs in small pens and their behaviors. I spent a fair amount of time in a pig pen. But I have to tell you, half of my papers didn't even get published, because Stan Curtis didn't think they were worthy.

I studied cattle in dip tanks and what it was like to go through one. I designed a tank that worked and kept the tank from tipping over. That practice stopped when Ivomec came along.

SF: What is the best thing you've ever done for animal welfare?

TG: In 1999, I devised a very simple

scoring system to measure meatpacking plants on animal welfare, particularly to prevent animals from falling down. I also helped design a lot of cattle-handling facilities for meat plants and for a lot of farmers, too.

I'm really proud of a book I wrote called *Temple Grandin's Guide to Working with Farm Animals*. It's for kids and small farms.

SF: And on the autism side?

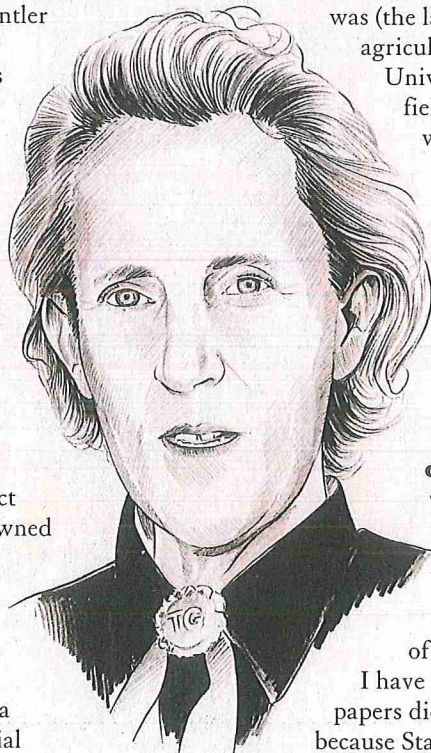
TG: I do a lot of talks with kids and parents. I talk about different kinds of minds and different ways that people think. I see too many kids who don't fit a certain norm, and they get shunted off to nowhere. Those kids can do really well on farms and in certain skilled trades.

Now, we seem to favor mathematical thinkers and not visual thinkers like myself. That is a mistake. You know, Einstein was autistic. So was Edison and probably Steve Jobs, too.

SF: What are your best animal-handling tips for farmers and ranchers?

TG: I tend to think of the simple things. For instance, when you're working cattle, look for things that make them balk. Maybe it's a coat hung on the fence or a pickup parked in the wrong spot. Work them in smaller groups at a time. Calm down. When you're calm, they're calm.

Realize that good handling matters. It pays you back in better cattle performance. **SF**



Stay Healthy

How to Manage Your WEIGHT AFTER 50

Hoping to lose weight this year? 45 million Americans are right there with you. Here's what you need to know to do it right. *By Sheryl Kraft*

Tempted to jump-start a new year by embarking on one of those "miracle" diets that are all over the news? Not so fast! Turns out that many fad diets eliminate entire food groups and skimp on nutrients necessary for good health. The trendy paleo diet, for instance, lacks whole grains, dairy and legumes, says Kate Patton, a registered dietitian with Cleveland Clinic's Heart and Vascular Institute.

And because dietary needs—and the ability to utilize and absorb nutrients—change with age, it's more important than ever to focus on a high-quality diet once you reach your 50s.

That doesn't mean you can't lose weight if you're over 50, says Scott Kahan, M.D., director of the National Center for Weight and Wellness in Washington, D.C. "On the contrary, one of the largest studies [of behavioral weight loss] showed that those over 50 and 60 were as successful as younger people."

Along with exercise to boost your slowing metabolism (aim for 30 minutes of aerobic activity each day plus strength training to build muscle a couple times per week), consider these expert-approved diets.

Intermittent Fasting (I.F.)

More than 40 studies have found I.F.—restricting food consumption to certain hours or eating limited calories on certain days—effective for weight loss.

Health Perks: I.F. may increase muscle mass, boost metabolism and longevity, reduce blood pressure and help prevent heart conditions, some cancers and Type 2 diabetes. Research finds that I.F. causes your body to go into its fat stores for energy, and that it can

also protect memory.

Tip: Fasting between 8 p.m. and lunch may be easiest for most people, since they're asleep part of the time.

DASH Diet

Designed to lower blood pressure by cutting sodium, DASH (Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension) emphasizes whole grains, low-fat dairy, fruits and vegetables and includes some fish, poultry, legumes, nuts and seeds.

Health Perks: It may help lower blood pressure and prevent osteoporosis, cancer, heart disease, stroke and diabetes.

Tip: If you miss salt, substitute with herbs and spices.

WW

Formerly known as Weight Watchers, the program, available online and in-person, assigns points to what you eat and drink based on age, height, weight and sex. You can shape and track your own diet. There are no "must-eat" foods, and no foods are forbidden.

Health Perks: The diet can help reduce blood pressure, stabilize blood sugar and meet

important nutrient requirements by encouraging a wealth of fruits and vegetables, says Bonnie Taub-Dix, author of *Read It Before You Eat It: Taking You From Label to Table*.

Tip: Social support adds to long-term weight loss success, experts say.

NUTRIENTS FOR 50+

Since it's tougher to absorb certain nutrients as we age, make sure to include protein to prevent muscle loss, lutein for your eyesight and magnesium for healthy blood pressure, says registered dietitian Jill Weisenberger, author of *Prediabetes: A Complete Guide*.

In addition, the National Institutes of Health and Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics recommend:

- ▶ 1,000–1,200 mg/day of calcium
- ▶ 2,600–3,400 mg/day of potassium
- ▶ 25–38 grams/day of fiber
- ▶ 2.4 mcg/day of vitamin B12
- ▶ 600 IU/day of vitamin D

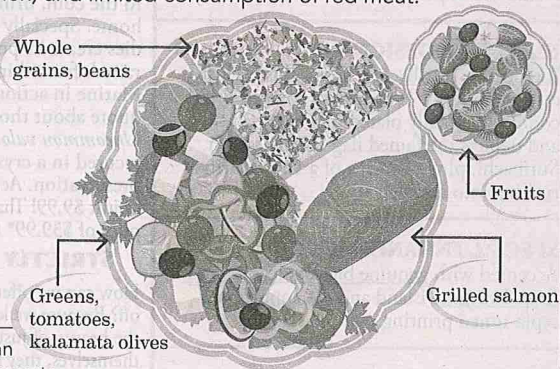
Mediterranean Diet

The Mediterranean diet emphasizes plant-based foods like fruits, vegetables, whole grains, beans, nuts and seeds, plus fish, other seafood and healthy fats (like olive oil and avocados). It includes moderate servings of dairy, poultry and eggs, red wine in moderation (about one to two glasses per day for men; one glass per day for women) and limited consumption of red meat.

Health Perks: The combination of these foods may reduce inflammation, help decrease triglycerides, decrease the risk of dementia, heart disease and stroke and build stronger bones. Research consistently shows that the Mediterranean diet is effective in increasing your lifespan and promoting healthy aging.

Tip: Watch your portions; these foods are healthy but can't be eaten in unlimited quantities.

Visit Parade.com/olive for the best Mediterranean diet recipes—including snacks, breakfasts and desserts.



Resource List – Right to Harm

Videos / YouTube / Ted Talks

Why we should be urban farming - <https://youtu.be/XaEKJ5Vv3Zg>

Discovery Channel - Rancher Farmer Fisherman -
<https://www.discovery.com/tv-shows/rancher-farmer-fisherman>

See how Urban farming works - <https://youtu.be/FoJCUAXQBmE>

The Compost Story - <https://youtu.be/bqDQD8cvO5Y>

Soil Health PSA - Astronomer Dr. Laura Danly - <https://youtu.be/6tJlKajDjjo>

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) - Understanding Climate Smart Agriculture - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IUdNMsVDIZ0>

Jonathan Foley - The Other Inconvenient Truth -
https://www.ted.com/talks/jonathan_foley_the_other_inconvenient_truth

Birke Baehr - What's wrong with our food system?
www.ted.com/talks/birke_baehr_what_s_wrong_with_our_food_system

Mark Bittman - What's wrong with what we eat?
www.ted.com/talks/mark_bittman_on_what_s_wrong_with_what_we_eat

Tristram Stuart - The global food waste scandal
www.ted.com/talks/tristram_stuart_the_global_food_waste_scandal

OUR LAND Episode 1-7 - <https://ourland.tv/episodes>

Websites / Blogs

CSA Farm Directory - <https://landstewardshipproject.org/stewardshipfood/csa>

Local Foods College - <http://www.extension.umn.edu/rsdp/statewide/local-foods-college>

Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy - <https://www.iatp.org>

The Dirty Dozen - <https://www.ewg.org/foodnews/dirty-dozen.php>

The Clean Fifteen - <https://www.ewg.org/foodnews/clean-fifteen.php>

Fishers & Farmers Partnership for the Upper Mississippi River Basin -
fishersandfarmers.org

On New Ground - <https://www.linkedin.com/in/nancynorthnewground/?trk=public-profile-join-page>

Land Stewardship Project - Farming to Capture Carbon & Address Climate Change Through Building Soil Health - <https://landstewardshipproject.org/carbonfarming>

Kiss the Ground - save the soil, save the world www.kisstheground.com

Land Stewardship Project – White Paper Shows MN Ag’s Potential to Mitigate Climate Change & Improve Water Quality - <https://landstewardshipproject.org/posts/1257>

Lexicon of Sustainability - <https://www.lexiconoffood.com/users/elaine-ingham>

Soil and Water Conservation Society - <https://www.swcs.org>

Articles

UMN study shows wetlands provide landscape-scale reduction in nitrate pollution - <https://twin-cities.umn.edu/news-events/umn-study-shows-wetlands-provide-landscape-scale-reduction-nitrate-pollution>

Go vegan, save the world? MPR - <https://www.mprnews.org/story/2018/04/04/study-vegan-diet-could-feed-twice-us-population>

A Secret Superpower, Right in Your Backyard - <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/03/06/climate/yard-garden-global-warming.html>

Cory Booker’s halt on factory farms would help the climate
<https://www.iatp.org/blog/202001/cory-bookers-halt-factory-farms-would-help-climate>

Radio / Podcasts

Study: The Mississippi is pretty healthy until it gets south of St. Cloud – MPR.org
<https://www.mprnews.org/story/2017/01/25/upper-mississippi-river-quality-report>

Books

The Atlas of Food - Who Eats What, Where and Why, by Erik Millstone and Tim Lang

Full Planet, Empty Plates - The New Geopolitics of Food Scarcity, by Lester R. Brown

Just Food, by James E. McWilliams

The Local Food Revolution: How Humanity Will Feed Itself in Uncertain Times, by Michael Brownlee

Contact Me

It’s vital that we all have enough food to eat – healthy food that’s produced in a way to promote soil health and clean water, obtained through fair production practices and access. As a conductor, I synthesize ideas and bring sustainable projects into clear focus for implementation. Because of my capacity to build partnerships, the work I do is both broad and deep. Join me in my passion to create a healthy and fair local food system - let’s alter the legacy we leave behind for future generations.

Kelly Rae Kirkpatrick - 507.271.1081 - kellyraekirkpatrick@gmail.com

A pig problem

Dozens of states are being overrun by aggressive feral hogs, who eat everything in their path. Can they be controlled?

How many feral hogs are there?

Their population has exploded to an estimated 6 million across 39 states, with the greatest concentration in the South, particularly Texas. Feral hogs—also known as wild boars, wild pigs, and “razorbacks”—are prodigious breeders, have few natural predators, and are voracious, causing \$2.5 billion in damage to farms and ecosystems annually. Like all pigs, the feral variety are omnivores and will devour anything they can tear up with their long snouts and 6-inch-long, razor-sharp tusks, including crops, gardens, frogs, worms, eggs, and even deer and lambs. They favor plants, and 50-pig herds, or “sounders,” can empty whole fields of corn or wheat overnight. The invasive species has spread far and wide largely because it is well adapted to its environment and breeds so rapidly, with ranchers and hunters making the problem worse by trucking wild hogs into new areas so they can be shot for sport. Hunting them to control their population hasn’t worked: You’d have to shoot 70 percent of the feral pig population every year just to keep it static.



Wild hogs are voracious and are among the smartest animals.

Where did the hogs come from?

Their roots on this continent can be traced to Spanish conquistador Hernando de Soto, who brought black Iberian pigs to America around 1540. The pigs flourished in the New World, with some escaping to create a feral population. These wild pigs would later crossbreed with Eurasian wild boar brought into the U.S. for hunting in the 1890s and 1930s, producing what Canadian animal science professor Ryan Brook calls “a super pig”—weighing 200 to 500 pounds, capable of running up to 30 mph (or faster than sprinter Usain Bolt), and equipped with a wily intelligence that enables them to learn from their experiences. “They’re one of the smartest animals on the planet,” says wildlife biologist Alan Leary. They’re also among the most prolific: Female hogs, or sows, begin breeding at around 6 months old and crank out two litters of four to 12 piglets every year. The hogs live five to eight years and are adapting to more northern climates, with their thick fur letting them migrate toward Canada. They’ve also learned to keep warm in colder states by burrowing into the snow to create “pigloos.”

Are they a threat to humans?

Feral hogs are nocturnal and rarely attack people, although in the predawn darkness last November, wild pigs attacked Christine Rollins, 59, in rural Texas and bit her to death. New York Mets slugger Yoenis Cespedes missed

all of last season after a wild boar lunged at him on his Florida ranch, causing Cespedes to step into a hole and break his ankle. Hogs are mostly feared, however, for their indiscriminate eating; researchers have cut open a dead hog’s stomach and found it bursting with baby sea turtles. One study found that mammals and birds are 26 percent less diverse in forests with feral pigs. With no sweat glands, hogs wallow in water to cool off, introducing pathogens to water systems. They can carry at least 32 diseases, and scientists have blamed *E. coli* outbreaks on feral hogs defecating in spinach and lettuce fields.

“Generally, an invasive species is detrimental to one crop,” said Dale Nolte of the Department of Agriculture. “Feral swine are destructive across the board.”

Can their population be controlled?

All efforts to curtail the hog invasion have thus far been futile. Congress included \$75 million in the 2018 Farm Bill for “feral swine eradication,” but actually wiping out the South’s millions of pigs is widely considered impossible. In desperation, Texas—which has 2 million wild hogs—passed a law last year allowing people to shoot the marauders without a hunting license, and the state allows hog hunting year-round and without individual limits.

Countless videos on YouTube show hunters on trucks or in helicopters blasting one scurrying pig after another like targets in an arcade game. Some ranchers even use bombs to blow up groups of hogs. Still, the wild hog population grows.

Can they be eaten?

Ranchers do trap feral pigs and sell them in Oklahoma and Florida to government slaughterhouses, which sell the pork cheaply. Many Southern restaurants are trying to make use of the excess meat, especially from sows and young boars. At his restaurant outside Austin, chef Taylor Hall only has to pay \$35 per feral pig. The meat is very lean and has an intensely gamey flavor, but when mixed with fattier domestic pork to make a ragù for pasta, “it can be absolutely fabulous,” Hall said. Unfortunately, pork-loving Americans can’t solve the country’s “greatest emerging wildlife challenge,” said John Mayer, a government biologist in South Carolina. “We’re not going to barbecue our way out of this one.”

The threat of African swine fever

The U.S. is one of the few major pork producers unscathed by African swine fever, which is spreading throughout southeast Asia and eastern Europe. American pork is being shipped in record amounts to China, where African swine fever has already killed at least one-third of the pigs. Countries are frantically insulating themselves, with France building 82 miles of fence to keep wild boar out, and Denmark erecting fencing along its border with Germany. African swine fever doesn’t affect humans, but it’s highly contagious among pigs and kills them within a few days. The virus can also spread through ticks, manure, knives used to cut carcasses, even farmers’ clothing. With a \$1 trillion hog sector, China is the world’s top pork consumer, and the financial firm Rabobank estimates that China’s pig losses are closer to 55 percent. As the world’s biggest pork exporter, the U.S. has a lot to lose if the disease reaches these shores, and the Department of Agriculture last year added 60 beagle teams to the 119 it already had sniffing for contraband pork at airports and seaports. “If this gets in,” said Dave Pyburn, a scientist at the National Pork Board, “it will destroy our industry as we know it.”

MFU, Birchwood Cafe to partner on new restaurant

WITH A SHARED commitment to family farmers, a partnership between the Minnesota Farmers Union and Birchwood Cafe, Minneapolis, was only natural. The two proved the joint venture was successful for several years by offering Birchwood foods at MFU's Minnesota State Fair booth.

The two organizations recently announced they are taking the next step. They are expanding their partnership to form the MFU/Birchwood Alliance, with plans to open a new restaurant at 750 S. Second St. in Minneapolis.

The site is the longtime home of chef

Brenda Langton's Spoonriver restaurant. The riverside location will continue to focus on local, seasonal and sustainably sourced ingredients.

The new collaboration with Birchwood and the 14,000 farmers of MFU builds on the notion of "farm to table" in a whole new

way, strengthening farm-to-community connections to result in more of the good, real food for which Birchwood is revered.

The restaurant will open later this year.

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MARKET UPDATES

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REGIONAL NEWS

Farmers Union to take over restaurant space in Minneapolis

By PETER SCHARPE
Minnesota Farm Guide

MINNEAPOLIS – Minnesota Farmers Union (MFU), in partnership with Birchwood Café, is taking over the restaurant space at 750 South 2nd Street in Minneapolis. The riverside eatery will feature Minnesota-grown products and produce.

"We have the opportunity to get the farmer's story out there, and I think that's really the best part about it," said Gary Wertish, MFU president. "This is an opportunity to try to educate consumers through their food of the importance of farmers."

MFU took over ownership of the building at the beginning of the year. It is currently undergoing construction and remodeling. The plan is to be ready to open this spring.

The building is located in downtown Minneapolis, next to the Mill City Museum and across from the Guthrie Theater. It was previ-

ously known as Spoonriver.

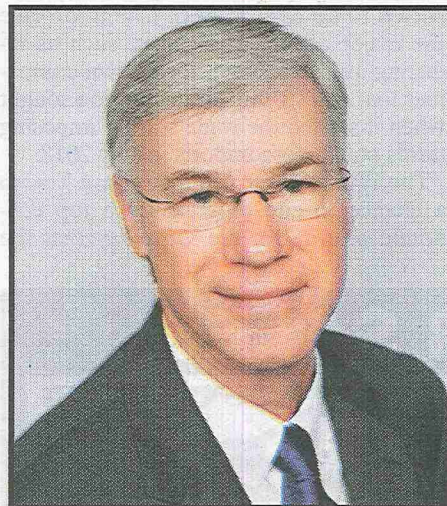
Spoonriver was home to Chef Brenda Langton, a pioneer in the farm-to-table movement. The location is already well known in the Twin Cities area for providing locally-sourced foods.

"It's a historic part of Minneapolis," he said. "The flour mill, farming and farmers played a big role in establishing Minneapolis."

With any venture like this, there is risk. By partnering with Birchwood Café, MFU hopes to mitigate as much of that risk as possible.

Birchwood Café has 24 years of experience in the restaurant business. They pride themselves on serving locally sourced foods in the Twin Cities area.

As the restaurant gets closer to its opening day, MFU will be reaching out to their 14,000 farmer members for help. They will be looking for growers who can, not just provide the



Gary Wertish

food to fill the restaurant, but also share their stories with the customers.

Social media will play a major role in both advertising the establishment, as well as getting those individual farmer stories out to the public.

Less than 1 percent of the nation's population are farmers, but agriculture accounts for 30 percent of the nation's economy. Everyone is impacted by farmers, even if they don't know how.

A farmer-owned restaurant serving locally-grown food is one way to bridge the gap between grower and consumer, putting those farmers directly in front of the consumers.

"We want to show the farmers behind the food and the struggles that they go through to provide that food to the consumer," Wertish said. "It's a chance to put a Minnesota farmer's food directly from the farm right onto the consumer's plate at our restaurant." *

Meeting with Your Elected Officials

MOST LEGISLATORS WANT TO MEET WITH CITIZENS FROM THEIR DISTRICTS

Meeting with your elected official is simply a face-to-face version of writing a letter or having a telephone conversation. Most legislators want to meet with citizens from their districts to hear their concerns and recommendations. You only have to be passionate about an issue to get your message across, not an expert lobbyist. Because you hold the power of the vote, your opinions carry more weight than any number of paid lobbyists. Don't be afraid to lobby; it is simply expressing your opinion and trying to convince someone that your view is the correct one.

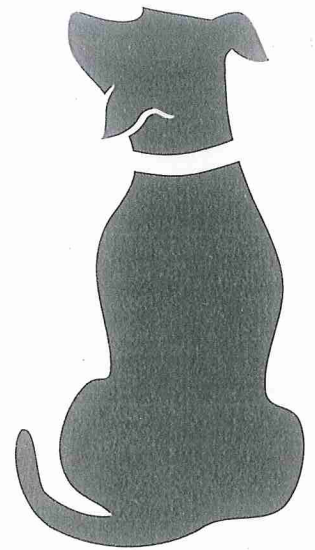
It may be difficult to set up a meeting during the hectic legislative session, but usually the legislator will take the time if you are willing to travel to the state capitol or Washington D.C. Often you can arrange a meeting

while your legislator is home around holidays or during recesses. Remember that you have several elected officials at the federal, state and local levels with different decision-making authority. If appropriate, you should contact all of them if they can support your issue.

Attending Town Meetings

A large and well-informed turnout at a town hall meeting or a community forum is an extremely effective way to send a strong message to your congressperson, the media, and the general public (via the media). If your lawmaker is supportive of your issue, a show of support helps to solidify his or her position.

Sometimes lawmakers participate in events not open to the public, except by invitation. If you know of an event that you would like to attend, but it is not open to the public, call the



legislator's office and ask if you can attend. In general, when attending and speaking at town meetings, conduct yourself as you would when testifying at a hearing or meeting with your elected officials.

BEFORE THE TOWN MEETING...

- Find out the legislator's schedule. News outlets, social media sites and websites often publish these dates, or sometimes the lawmaker will send out a schedule to voters in his or her district. The most reliable way to find the schedule is to call his or her office.

(over, please)



**THE HUMANE SOCIETY
OF THE UNITED STATES**

- Try to recruit several others to attend the meeting with you. Inform them of the date, time, address and nature of the meeting. If you have the time and resources, provide background information, salient points and sample questions.
- Think about how the congressperson will likely respond to your questions, and prepare in advance with answers and follow-up questions.

AT THE TOWN MEETING...

- Keep your comments brief, clear and to the point.
- If you attend with a group, wear stickers or buttons to identify that you are all in support of a common issue.

Getting to Know Your Elected Officials

We encourage you to meet and develop a relationship with the state legislators who represent you in your state's capitol as well as your U.S. representative and U.S. senators. Here are a few tips to get you started. If taking the

first step makes you nervous, get a group together and plunge in!

There are 535 elected members of Congress and nearly 8,000 state legislators throughout the country. They are approachable. You can start with local officials such as the mayor or a city or county council member. Most state or federal officials began their careers in local government. If you are a constituent, simply call an elected official and ask them to meet you to discuss some issues of importance to you. Find out who represents you at humanesociety.org/leglookup.

Meet with elected officials. In some states, the legislative staff is large, but many other elected officials operate virtually on their own or with one aide. State legislators may have offices in the state capitol, but they spend most of their time in their home districts. Your members of Congress have offices in Washington, D.C. and several offices in their districts or across their states.

If you've never known how to take that first step, here are some tips:

BE POLITICALLY ACTIVE

Put campaign signs in your yard, volunteer to work on a campaign, or attend political

functions. Buy tickets to political fundraisers or work for a political party. Any legislator you actively support will get to know you and appreciate you! (Note: this is electioneering. As an individual you can help with political activities, but nonprofit organizations cannot.)

INVOLVE YOUR LOCAL ANIMAL SHELTER

If you're involved with a local shelter or rescue, invite the politician to take a tour and to be a part of activities (such as spay/neuter clinics, rabies inoculation clinics, pet picture days and rummage sales). He or she may be happy to be a master of ceremonies or just to be introduced to the crowd. Invite the legislator's pet, too! If the legislator is interested in getting a pet, encourage him or her to adopt.

GIVE AWARDS

If a public official is deserving of recognition, present him or her with an award. Do it publicly and invite the media. If you are presenting someone in your community with an award or certificate of appreciation, involve local elected officials. Let him/her know ahead of time so a letter of congratulations can be written.



Wisdom & Grace

Be humble and gentle. Be patient with each other, making allowance for each other's faults because of your love. Try always to be led along together by the Holy Spirit and so be at peace with one another.

Ephesians 4:2-3

Living Bible

