



North Dakotans Reject Measure 1 and Corporate Farms

Dakota Resource Council Staff

DRC members and allies celebrated a victory on June 14 after North Dakotans overwhelmingly rejected a haphazard law passed by the state legislature to open the floodgates to corporate farming.

“It was a hard-fought campaign and we worked diligently to educate North Dakotans and turn them out to vote. We are very pleased with the result,” said DRC Chair Craig Scott, who lives in Burleigh County. “The fight is not over, and we will continue organizing and building people power to make North Dakota a great place to live.”

Since 1932, North Dakota’s anti-corporate farming law has facilitated the growth of one of the strongest agricultural economies in the world. Measure 1 was a referral of SB 2351, a law rushed through the 2015 legislative session by proponents of corporate farming in an attempt to increase the number of cows and pigs in North Dakota. The law would have allowed non-family corporate ownership of land for concentrated animal feeding operations (CAFOs).

“This may have increased the number of animals but it would have decreased the number of family farmers and squeezed the wealth out of rural communities,” said DRC member Father Tom Graner of Pierce County. “People in North Dakota made it clear they understand the dangers of corporations running our farms.”

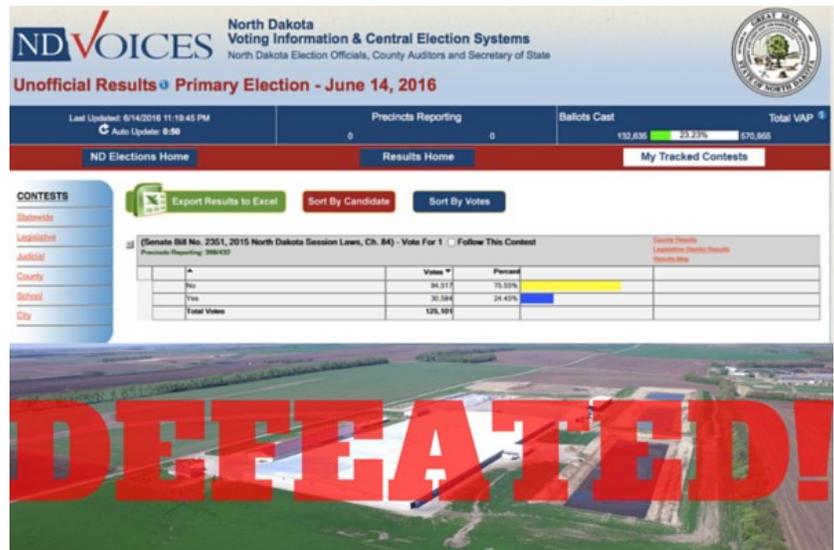
The defeat of Measure 1 is a testament to the power of ordinary people standing up to make their voices heard. DRC looked at other states with corporate agriculture operations and found stories of destruction, intimidation and devaluation.

“Throughout other parts of our country that allow corporate farming, it is very clear that large confinement dairy and hog operations do not increase rural employment or promote rural economic development,” said DRC member Jeri Lynn Bakken of Adams County, responding to the impacts of corporate farming on other states. “Corporate feeding operations employ far fewer and lower-paid workers than the family farmers that they inevitably displace.”

In the shadow of the campaign against corporate farming and Measure 1, the town of Buffalo, ND is dealing with a proposed 9,000-hog factory. This is precisely the type of so-called animal agriculture North Dakotans rejected by voting No on Measure 1. A county-level approval decision is still pending. The full suite of videos, plus more information about Measure 1 and anti-corporate farming efforts, is available at <http://drcinfo.org/familyfarms>.

Although the anti-corporate farming law is supported by an overwhelming majority of North Dakotans, there are still people working to attack it. A few weeks ago, the North Dakota Farm Bureau filed a federal lawsuit to challenge the popular and effective anti-corporate farming law—a last ditch effort to try undermining democracy and the will of North Dakotans.

“Men like my grandfather understood the way to build strong communities was to ensure family farmers owned the land they worked and lived in the communities they served,” said Bakken. “By rejecting corporate farming, North Dakota becomes the trendsetter for a non-corporate model of modern agriculture that people around the country, and even the world, will want to emulate.”



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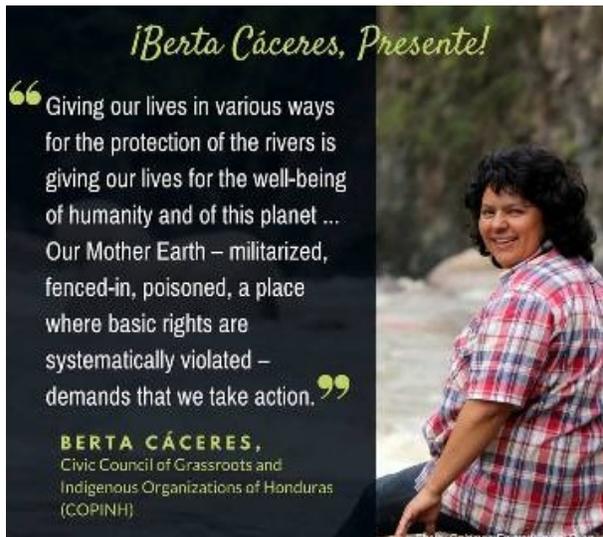
Family Farm Agenda Fall 2016

The Family Farm Agenda is published three times annually by the National Family Farm Coalition, a nonprofit providing a voice for grassroots groups on farm, food, trade and rural economic issues to ensure fair prices for family farmers and fishers, safe and healthy food, and vibrant, environmentally sound rural communities here and around the world.

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Berta, Presente!

Berta Cáceres (COPINH) was an environmental and indigenous rights activist who was slain in her home in Honduras on March 3, 2016. She fought multi-national corporations seeking cheap access to public waters and land. Her murderer may not be found or prosecuted but her fight against greed and exploitation persists.

NFFC and many member groups have shown solidarity with COPINH and with the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe in their fight against the Dakota Access Pipeline.

Pollinator Campaign Travels to D.C.

Carson Peacock, NFFC

The 'Keep the Hives Alive' tour culminated in DC on June 22. Holly Holt, Joint Venture science coordinator, declared that 20% of neonicotinoid (nicotine-like) pesticides are absorbed by all parts of the plant, including pollen, but 80% remains in the soil to be carried away by water.

The loss of milkweed—a major monarch habitat—has severely impacted pollinator populations. Wider use of glyphosate (aka RoundUp) correlates with a sharp decline in monarch populations east of the Rocky Mountains. Various aspects of industrialized agriculture augment pollinator loss, and Holt sought support for research, habitat restoration, education and outreach initiatives for this issue.

Commercial beekeeper James Cook described watching pesticide-laden dust from his neighbor's field drift into his holding yard, after which 1,500 of his hives collapsed. Cook drove his truck with 2.5 million dead bees from North Dakota to DC to spread awareness of the issues facing pollinators.

The final event was a rally at EPA headquarters where beekeepers, business owners and farmers, including Jim Goodman (Family Farm Defenders) asked for stricter pesticide regulations. The group chanted "No Bees, No Food" before presenting a petition demanding immediate restrictions. The next day Jim, Betsy Garrold (Food for Maine's Future) and allies met with EPA, USDA and congressional representatives to discuss farmers' potential access to uncoated seeds, Senator Merkley's draft of the Pollinator Recovery Act of 2016, and stronger pesticide regulation.



Noah Lederman and Betsy Garrold for NFFC at EPA HQ

Together, We Changed the Food System

Kati Gallagher, Vermont Right to Know GMOs

As readers have likely heard, President Obama signed the so-called “DARK Act” overriding Vermont’s GMO labeling law, and the Vermont Attorney General announced that this law will no longer be enforced. Despite this heartbreaking turn of events, everyone should be incredibly proud of what was accomplished over the past few years.

Today, anyone entering grocery stores in Vermont and across the US will find genetically engineered foods labeled, and Vermont was a driving force in making that happen. Campbell’s, Mars and other major food manufacturers announced that they will continue to label their products, and others are expected to follow suit. Vermont also successfully defended the law in court, bolstering consumers’ right to know about what ingredients are in a wide range of products on our store shelves.

This all begs the question, “What’s next?” The campaign for transparency and fairness in our food system is not going to end, but the playing field is shifting. For example, over the next two years the VT Right to Know GMOs Coalition will work with allies across the country to make the new national labeling standard as strong as possible, despite its many substantial flaws. We will also work with consumers to call on companies who labeled their food for Vermont to continue labeling their products while national standards are being developed.

This inspiring campaign showed once again the amazing impact this small state can have on important national issues. Tens of thousands of activists in Vermont and beyond spent countless hours contacting legislators and attending workshops to make their voice heard. They engaged in a political process standing for the right to know what is in their food.

Change of this magnitude comes slowly, but it will continue, as some VT Right to Know team members have said:

“We are committed to creating a transparent and just food system. The fact that the federal sham GMO Labeling law has also wiped out Vermont’s long-standing GE Seed Labeling law is an affront to states’ rights and farmers’ that we will work to overcome.” *Andrea Stander, Rural Vermont Director*

“The actions taken by the Congress and the President to overturn our labeling laws are deeply troubling, but not surprising. We need to continue to work to create a system where our elected officials represent the public interest, not a handful of wealthy special interests.” *Falko Schilling, VPIRG Consumer and Environmental Advocate*

“While we are deeply disappointed that this flawed, discriminatory and anti-consumer bill is now law, this fight is far from over. We will continue to work tirelessly for a food system with integrity, transparency, and one that demonstrates respect for the land that sustains us all.” *Maddie Monty, Policy Advisor NOFA-VT*

Promoting Peace and Justice at the People’s Convention in Cleveland

Led by Mardy Townsend (Ashtabula-Lake-Geauga Farmers Union), NFFC and Rural Coalition collaborated to draft a platform highlighting efforts to influence federal policy that increases fairness and equity for this nation’s diverse farmers, fishermen farm workers, other food providers and eaters. Lorette Picciano (RC director) noted the deep discussions about inclusivity that took place among several groups while assembling the economic justice platform. The NFFC-RC platform is below:

Policy makers must give the same respect and consideration for people, families and communities they give to corporations and the financial world. Policy makers and independent food growers should work together to:

- Ban mergers and enforce antitrust laws, especially in food businesses;
- End subsidies to farms when practices deplete land and water;
- Classify Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs) as industry and insist on improved practices around animal, human and environmental welfare;
- Support traditional foodways;
- Help farmers transition from petroleum-intense practices and chemical inputs to ecologically sound systems;
- Create penalties for chemical trespass (drift from sprays onto non-sprayed crops);
- Put money into Integrated Pest Management research and non-chemical strategies to control pests;
- Label GMOs;
- Ensure that government funds from WIC, SNAP and public institutions (schools, hospitals, military bases) can buy foods directly from local farmers and fishermen.

NFFC and Rural Coalition further developed their platform into the following four planks: (to page 5)



Right to Know GMOs: Cedar Circle Farm; Grow More, Waste Less; VPIRG; NFFC members NOFA-VT and Rural Vermont. VPIRG photo.

Is Water-Pollution Trading Coming to the Midwest?

John E. Peck, Family Farm Defenders

“Just between you and me...I think the economic logic behind dumping a load of toxic waste in the lowest wage country is impeccable and we should face up to that.... I've always thought that under-populated countries in Africa are vastly under-polluted.” - leaked 1991 memo from Lawrence Summers, then head of the World Bank and more recently an economic advisor to President Obama.

Pollution is a bad thing, right? Isn't the ultimate goal of the 1972 Clean Water Act to make all water in the U.S. swimmable, fishable and drinkable—as it once was? Well, think again... If you are a capitalist entrepreneur who believes, to paraphrase Reagan, in the “magic of the market place” then a lucrative opportunity awaits you in the emerging water pollution trading business!

A Nov. 2015 report from Food and Water Watch, titled “Water Quality Trading: Polluting Public Waterways for Private Profit” exposes this latest threat to our water quality and public health and—sadly—lists Wisconsin among the 22 states now using rural communities as guinea pigs in various experiments to commodify waste in an effort to supposedly mitigate its ecological impact. (The full report is at <http://bit.ly/1QYRVt4>.)

The report gives important background on the emergence of water pollution trading, and for those who have come to realize how carbon trading is a “false solution” to climate change, the scheme will be disturbingly familiar. Basically, in the age of corporatized neoliberalism, no rights are guaranteed. Everything—including the right to clean air, water, food, education, housing and healthcare—have become privatized commodities to be bought and sold in the marketplace. Under this pay-to-play scenario, if you are a marginalized lower income community, such as Flint, MI or Kewaunee County, WI, you will have to ante up or you will be dumped on. Polluters will no longer be responsible for cleaning up their own waste if they can find another “cheaper” offset alternative where people are too powerless or impoverished to protect themselves.

Two case studies detailed in the report from Ohio and Pennsylvania show the pitfalls in this water pollution versus water quality mafia style protection racket. In the case of the Chesapeake Bay, over half of the phosphorous pollution is coming from agriculture operations, specifically confinement poultry. Thanks to trading, though, poultry farms can ship their manure as fertilizer to pollute water in other parts of PA and get offset credits for this shell game. Brunner Island coal-fired power plant in York County, PA was also able to continue dumping as much nitrogen as desired as long as it could purchase water pollution credits elsewhere. The Alpine Cheese Co. in Winesburg, OH, was able to expand and increase its phosphorous dumping by 200% after buying best management practices (BMPs) offsets from 25 farms in the watershed. Of course, no one knows for sure if these BMPs occurred since there is no public oversight of the trading scheme by the Ohio EPA. Meanwhile, Alpine Cheese racked up over 700 violations between 2005 and 2011 on its already artificially inflated permitted discharge levels.

Current State Statute (283.84) already grants the Wisconsin DNR (Department of Natural Resources) the power to implement water-pollution trading between point sources and non-point sources. Trades can be made in any non-bioaccumulative pollutant, such as nitrogen, phosphorus, bacteria, and even toxins such as benzene. Such trading also enables polluters to exceed permit limits—for example, under the current DNR system Baker Cheese in Fond Du Lac County was able to exceed its legal phosphorus dumping level by converting nearby cropland into prairie and claiming the reduced runoff as a nonpoint swap. Given what has happened in PA, another foreseeable WI situation would have the DNR allowing a factory farm to ship its manure to an entirely different watershed by purchasing credits from a nonpoint source based upon dubious nutrient modeling that was probably in violation of the Great Lakes Compact. Making matters worse, as in Ohio, the Wisconsin DNR has no oversight provision—it is entirely up to the private trading partners to verify if claimed credits are legit or not. One can not trust polluters to police themselves, and—in fact—this “anything goes” Wild West atmosphere is already attracting many bad actors from afar—the notorious Tuls Family mega dairies now invading Wisconsin from Nebraska being a case in point.

Wisconsinites have had to learn the hard way the true costs of regulatory corruption and bureaucratic incompetence when it comes to neglecting water quality protection. In April 2015 FFD helped release a scathing report by the Socially Responsible Agriculture project (SRAP) documenting state negligence in the issuing of permits for factory farms in Kewaunee County. The full report can be found at: <http://www.sraproject.org/2015/06/the-rap-sheets-industrial-dairies-in-kewaunee-county-wisconsin/>. In October 2015, Midwest Environmental Advocates went further and filed a formal citizen petition, calling upon the EPA to intervene and resume enforcing the Clean Water Act in Wisconsin, given the obvious ineptitude of the DNR. A June 2016 report by the Legislative Audit Bureau revealed that if you violated the Clean Water Act in WI between 2005 and (to page 8)



Dakota Resource Council photo of fracking wastewater

LocalCatch.org Establishes Model 'Core Values' Statement

[LocalCatch.org](#) Network

The [LocalCatch.org](#) network is excited to release its [Core Values](#) statement, which expands the concept of 'sustainable seafood' to include values that no other certification or seafood list embraces.

The values emerged from the 2016 Local Seafood Summit, an assembly of more than 120 fishermen and community leaders from the US and beyond. The network reflects a unique alignment between fishermen, values-based seafood businesses, non-profit organizations and others creating a new fishing economy that transcends the niche market of CSFs (Community Supported Fisheries) and could potentially shift the existing seafood system.

The network is setting in place its foundational values to be used by fishing operations. This set of values will ensure that the right businesses thrive to serve as guides for institutions, e.g., hospitals and universities, seeking to go deeper than current certifications or seafood lists allow them. As one fisherman at the Summit stated: "... the emphasis on values is a reminder that money is not the only or ultimate goal...".

Since 2008 the Fish Locally Collaborative (FLC), a network convened by the Northwest Atlantic Marine Alliance, has initiated efforts to shift the seafood system away from the disastrous one in place today. The FLC started by connecting CSFs, which were modeled after the Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) movement that has allowed many farmers to be paid a fair price and to diversify the crops they grow to sell directly to customers. To ensure success of the CSF pilot programs — Port Clyde Fresh Catch, Walking Fish, Skipper Ottos CSF and others — the network developed a 'baitbox' to help fishing communities navigate the multiple challenges. There are now more than 60 CSFs in North America.

The [LocalCatch.org](#) network emerged as a community of practice that supports and encourages CSFs. The first CSF Summit, held in 2012, created connectivity and alignment among the 60+ attendees. Since then, innovations have led to Restaurant Supported Fisheries (RSFs) and other values-based seafood businesses that inspire regenerative, creative and economically sustainable fishing businesses beyond CSFs. These operations not only ensure fair price and pay to fishermen and workers along the seafood value chain, but create new opportunities in all-but-forgotten fishing communities, feed regional food systems and enable more people to access affordable, fresh, local seafood.

In addition to deep conversations around values, 2016 Summit participants learned about marketing and business tools. After all this activity, eleven of them volunteered to integrate the conversations and comments into this Core Values document.



Louisiana fishing boats (NFFC photo)

Promoting Peace and Justice at the People's Convention in Cleveland

Subsidy vs. Support -

Corporate agribusinesses profit from America's food system while farmers, fishermen and farmworkers often do not. When independent owners cannot profit, they lose their businesses. Growers need government policy that sets a minimum price to lessen the volatility in pricing. This contrasts to subsidies, which taxpayers provide. Rather than unfair subsidies, producers and consumers need a system that establishes reserves for lean times, and promotes land and resource conservation.

Fairness in Pricing -

Farmers, ranchers, fishers and food workers must receive fair compensation to cover costs of fuel, equipment, processing, seeds/raw materials and labor, to maintain the land or water, and to support families and communities. Farmers must be able to sell fresh, local food directly to federal nutrition programs, such as WIC and SNAP, and to government institutions like universities, hospitals and military bases. Federal policy should ban mergers between seed, input, and food corporations that violate anti-trust laws.

Agriculture Trade -

Trade agreements should respect the right of all peoples to protect their food production. Such policy must recognize each people's right and responsibility to make their own decisions about how to grow food, sustain food production, and feed all people within their borders. Genetics (seeds) should not be owned by multinational corporations, and policy must prevent agribusiness from buying crops at a price below the cost-of-production to dump on other countries.

Access to Land and Water -

The small- and medium-sized farmers, ranchers, fishermen and tribal nations who provide food, fiber and timber must be able to protect land and water, and access inputs like equipment and seed. Government programs must help them. Diverse, independent producers and traditional communities must be able to save seeds. Who will feed the world if healthy soil and clean water are controlled by corporations and wealthy landowners who do not engage in sustainable food production? Policy must support biodiversity, nutrition and economic justice.

'The Right to Food' at the World Social Forum

Dena Hoff

La Via Campesina had a wonderful delegation from the North American Region, as well as brothers and sisters from France, Norway and Brazil at the recent World Social Forum in Montreal, Quebec. Union Paysanne hosted us with great hospitality and efficiency, coordinating lodging, food and transportation with help from our own regional and international staff.

Our delegates led workshops related to agroecology, food sovereignty and climate as well as a press conference to voice the support of our region and our organizations. Via member Union Paysanne seeks to represent its small peasant members, and not to join and finance the union sanctioned by the government to represent all Quebecois farmers. We also discussed plans for the next regional meeting and for strengthening our region and Via Campesina as a whole, which were encouraging.

As a speaker on "The Right To Food In The US" panel, I included some background on the US' refusal to sign the international covenant on the right to food, on nutrition education and practice in public schools and on poverty guidelines and food access. We concluded that food sovereignty can open the door to the right to food. Below is a summary of my presentation: In 1952 (beginning of the Cold War era), President Eisenhower chose as his Secretary of Agriculture Ezra Taft Benson, whose rigid view of the role of government was that of the defender of private property. Secretary Benson noted that the new Russian Constitution gave its people the right to food, clothing and shelter, which, to him, made them slaves of the state and destroyed any initiative to work hard and "pull themselves up by their bootstraps". He also felt there were too many farmers with too much political clout, and started formulating policies to move them from the farms into urban factories.

At that time, many families in America had relatives on a farm or ranch, connections to land and local food, and a strong commitment to the people and wellbeing of their communities. Most small towns had many family-owned businesses—my once-vibrant hometown of 2,004 had five grocery stores as part of a regional food system. Today, 23.5 million Americans live in communities in which the convenience-store foods they can access are often unhealthy, culturally irrelevant and expensive.

In 1936, the Commodity Donation Program was established to eliminate crop surpluses. County offices handed out flour, dried milk and eggs, government cheese and other staple surplus to the poor. President Harry Truman instituted the school lunch program in 1946 upon hearing that children were too malnourished to serve in the military. Today many school lunch programs do not meet students' nutritional needs, yet 25% of young military recruits are too overweight to serve. Some school districts have used discretionary funds to set up locally based and nutritious lunch, breakfast and summer meal programs.

SNAP (supplemental nutritional assistance program) was introduced in 1961 as a Pilot Food Stamp Program. It may be the only food budget low-income families have after paying housing, utilities, transportation, child or medical care, and other expenses. Still, poverty guidelines do not adequately reflect real poverty so many families do not qualify for SNAP and go hungry.

Allegedly, 99% of US schools offer nutrition education, but the messages received are unknown. While 87% of teachers surveyed suggested that parents and teachers should be responsible for this education, they cited the barriers of inadequate classroom time, curricula, nutrition training and administrative support. Healthy communities gear their education to a healthy population, environment, economy and society, otherwise it is too easy for people to exist on industrial, processed foodstuff.

Battles are raging against the greed of multinational corporations claiming the world's resources necessary to thrive within a peaceful and dignified society. We must work together to stop the abuses of government-abetted capitalism and to achieve food sovereignty, which will be won by millions of grassroots efforts across the world. Take heart—you are not alone.

National Family Farm Coalition is Still Relevant

Ben Burkett, Federation of Southern Cooperatives/Land Assistance Fund

The Federation of Southern Cooperatives held its 49th annual meeting in August with more than 300 attendees. Next year will signify our 50th year, Land Loss Prevention Project's 35th year and the National Family Farm Coalition's 30th year, so we are looking at possibilities for a collective celebration.

Last month I served on a panel co-hosted by Farm Aid and USDA with three USDA personnel and FLAG attorney/advocate, Stephen Carpenter. Scott Marlow (RAFI-USA director) was the moderator. I tried to articulate that we as farmers need a fair price for our products—cotton, soybeans, corn, livestock, wheat and dairy, especially. There is no rationale for setting up new and beginning farmers with USDA loans and programs unless they are going to receive a fair price.

2017 will be a year with a new administration and new challenges. In preparing for the next Farm Bill, we are losing family farmers while mergers among gigantic corporations stifle our existence as small farm owners. We must continue to challenge the injustices and unfairness we have witnessed and to voice our stand for the survival of farm families across the US.

I would like to thank NFFC's staff and interns, the executive committee, board representatives and members, and all our funders, including Farm Aid, for their support this year. It has been a pleasure to serve NFFC as board President for eight years but also a challenge due to the economy and other outside influences. Travelling across this country and in the South, particularly, I am often asked "Is there still a need for groups such as the National Family Farm Coalition?" My response is, "You're damn right." *God bless America and the National Family Farm Coalition.*

Director's Take

Katherine Ozer



Kathy with Joel Greeno (FFD), Farm Aid Eve

Last month, family farmers and fishermen travelled to Farm Aid 2016 to raise their voices with those of the amazing musicians on stage singing to support our work. Farm Aid felt strongly that bringing our messages to USDA while in the DC area was imperative, and we totally agreed. Our voices desperately need to be part of the political debates on local, state, national and international levels. Dairy farmers in Pennsylvania, New York and California are losing farms at an alarming rate, while farmers sell their corn at \$2.00/bushel or less. The USDA and Obama Administration (despite a shout-out to NFFC from Deb Eschmeyer—executive director of the First Lady's Let's Move program—from the Farm Aid stage) claim that exports and free trade are the answer, but they do not offset the low prices paid for beef cattle which are exacerbated by Brazilian and other imports.

FY2016 in Congress ended September 30, and we continue to pressure USDA to issue the GIPSA regulations needed to protect the rights of contract growers. Funding for critical programs such as minority outreach and education (section 2501), farm credit mediation, FSA lending, and others lacking advocates for their expansion and fair implementation is another high priority. Congress has left town and will return after elections for a lame-duck session—hopefully to fund the government past the December 9 deadline and to stave off a vote on the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP). Our Dairy Committee is convening an emergency strategy session to follow up on meetings held at USDA last month.

NFFC has played an important role within the U.S. Food Sovereignty Alliance, helping to shape the Food Sovereignty Prize events being co-hosted in Seattle by our member Community Alliance for Global Justice to lift the work of allies FarmWorker Association of Florida and the Alliance for Food Sovereignty in Africa. Another ally, Community to Community Development (2014 Prize recipient), will co-host Prize events, and we congratulate them on their recent victory in the struggle to unionize Sakuma Farms berry pickers. We'll forward a link to the livestream of the prize ceremony as soon as it's available. (to page 8)

A Dairy Farmer's Letter

Robin Fitch, Progressive Agriculture Organization

Dear Congressman Gibson,

I am sure you're well aware that we dairy farmers have taken a 45% pay cut this year. As we try to figure out how to keep our heads above water and keep creditors happy, we read that NY is passing legislation to help young people enter into farming because there is no next-generation to take over. Well, I have a next-generation farmer—a 25 year-old son who loves the cows and does an awesome job as herdsman, milker, breeder, vet, record-keeper and many other jobs—yet you offer young people without much knowledge all kinds of opportunities to farm. They don't know that they'll be set up for failure, thanks to our broken pricing system. My son has the knowledge and experience to be your next-generation farmer, and this morning he said, "Mom, with these prices we are going to be forced to sell out." He knows that we are trying to keep going month after month with an outstanding feed bill and a barn needing repairs, but that working 18 hours a day isn't enough to cover the costs.

Two years ago we were planning to expand our herd from 200 to 300 cows. That would have meant about 1.5 million dollars for building the facility, and paying at least one full-time employee, maybe two. Thank God we didn't do this.

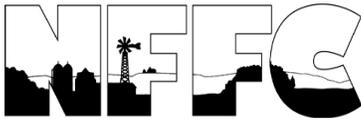
I don't know many kids like this, but imagine a 25 year-old who is not worried about spending money but just wants to make enough to pay the bills; who is not afraid to get up at 4:00 AM and work until 1:00-2:00 the next morning with no naps, coffee or even lunch breaks, sometimes. The kid who loves the cows just like family; who wants to keep improving the herd and to supply people with quality milk. It seems we sit back and watch his farm that he loves and has worked so hard for slip away while you offer some beginning farmer—with no real experience—great deals. This looks a little bit backwards to me, and I know my son is not the only farm kid in this situation because I've talked to farmers all over this nation in the same boat.

The Federal Milk Marketing Improvement Act is the only way to fix this situation. I would like to speak to you on this bill and to know that you will seriously consider sponsoring it for us now. Maybe if you had done this sooner I would not be having a cattle dealer at my farm to assess my cows and start the process of selling out.

I truly hope you hear the pain in this letter and do what is right by sponsoring the Federal Milk Marketing Improvement Act.



Farmers Robin Fitch and her son Justin visited USDA in September to discuss a better dairy pricing policy



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Support Family Farmers, Ranchers,
Fishermen & Workers!

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Pollution Trading

A June 2016 report by the Legislative Audit Bureau revealed that if you violated the Clean Water Act in WI between 2005 and 2015 there was a whopping 94% chance nothing would happen to you – so much for deterring criminal activity! Back in 2011 the EPA found more than 75 deficiencies in Wisconsin's regulation of water pollution, and recent budget cuts and staff layoffs at the DNR have only made this ticking time bomb worse. One can only imagine the disasters that will ensue if unchecked pollution trading were to be unleashed upon WI's woefully vulnerable water supplies.

In short, water pollution trading is nothing more than a modern-day version of the snake oil peddler, offering a capitalist panacea for an environmental problem that will just make the ailment worse. The real solution is to reduce pollution and to actually make water cleaner, and the best way to do that is to hasten the transition from industrial agribusiness (aka factory farms) to sustainable agroecology (aka grass-based, organic, small-scale operations). Like the Hippocratic Oath's "do no harm" for healthcare providers, the principle of food sovereignty would suggest to family farmers that they should do no harm to the earth, air or water, rather than just shifting damage elsewhere. Pollution is hardly a commodity worth buying or selling, and promoting water pollution trading only adds insult to injury.

FIRST CLASS

Director's Take

2016 has been a surreal year on many levels. I weathered chemotherapy to learn mid-summer that my cancer persists to require new and different treatments, although I have not felt "sick" one day since May 2015. Years of fighting for the causes I care about so deeply, my eternal optimism and support from family and friends have kept me going during these struggles.

Since August 4, I have focused on raising \$58,000 in donations for NFFC by the end of 2016 to support the campaigns our members have prioritized. Last month two fundraisers added \$18,000, and a supporter match increased that amount to \$38,000. I am confident that we can raise at least \$20,000 more new funds before the end of 2016. Our executive committee is committed to developing a comprehensive, long-term funding strategy to keep NFFC moving forward.

~ 2016 Fall Calendar ~

- October 12-15, Seattle, WA:** Food Sovereignty Prize Events
- October 16:** US Food Sovereignty Alliance Natl. Day of Action
- October 17-19, Minneapolis:** PANNA Pollinator Meeting
- October 27-29, DC:** AgroEcology Forum
- November 5, Sheridan, WY:** PWBRC 44th Annual Meeting
- November 8, Nationwide:** Election Day
- November 8-20, WI-MO-MS:** Small Farmers of Brazil visit NFFC