

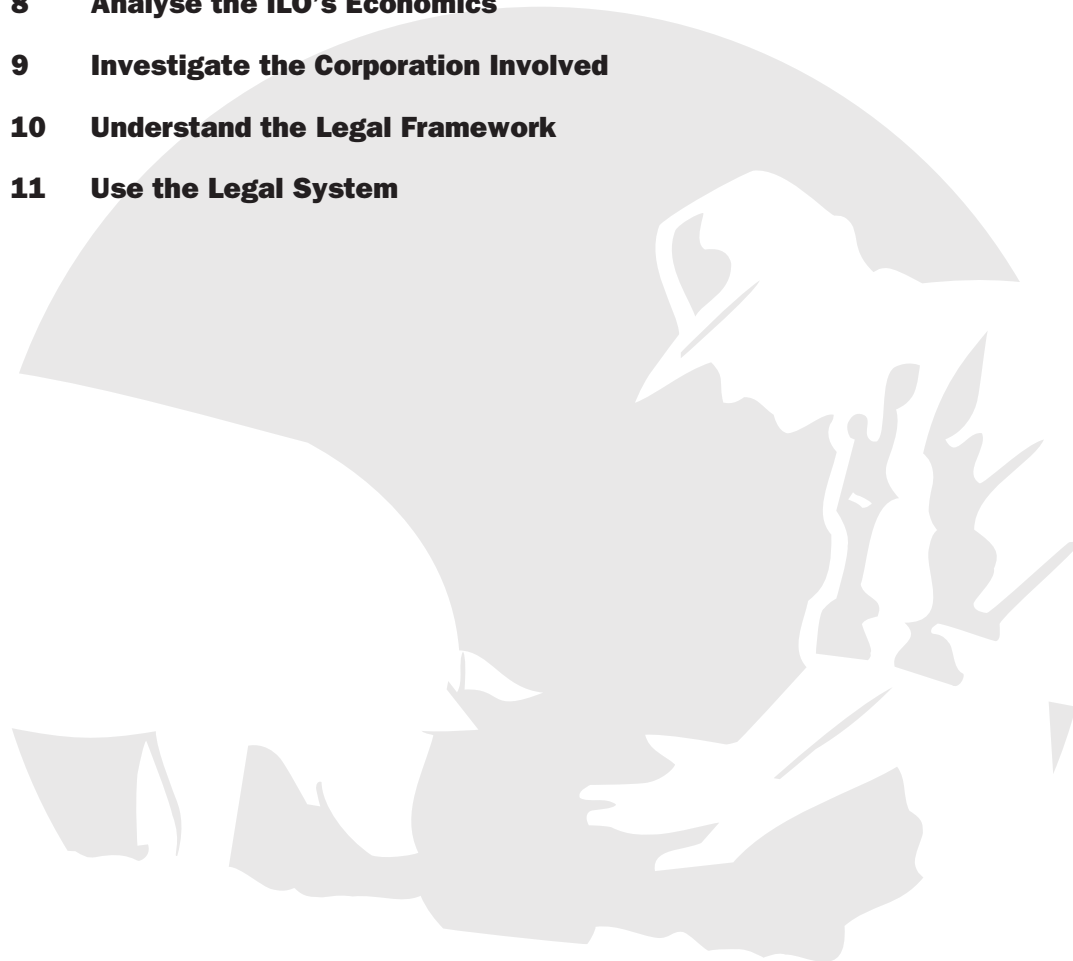
The Beyond Factory  
Farming Coalition's

# Citizens' Guide to Confronting a Factory Farm

*a handbook for protecting your community*

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A factory farm is moving into your area, or one operating near you is causing problems and you aren't sure what to do. This Guide has been created to help you understand the issues surrounding factory farms and assist you in organizing your community. We have included tips on the type of information to gather, where to gather it, and what to do once you've obtained all the relevant information.

We have found the most important steps in dealing with a factory farm are to educate yourself and to organize your community and surrounding region. This is a community battle, and you need help from as many people as possible.

You may feel overwhelmed, unsure, and even a little lost. We want to assure you that you are not alone. There are many groups around the country working on the same issue, and we will do our best to network you with them.

If you have any tips or suggestions for future groups, please let us know. We are grateful for any information you would like to share.

The Beyond Factory Farming Coalition's vision is "*Livestock Production for Health and Social Justice*". Our mission is to promote livestock production that supports food sovereignty, ecological, human and animal health as well as local sustainability and community viability and informed citizen/consumer choice.

We wish you the best of luck,

The Beyond Factory Farming Coalition Team

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## Definitions

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### **Animal Unit**

An animal unit is *not* simply one animal, but rather a measuring unit for livestock production that varies from province to province. In most cases one animal unit is calculated based on the amount of feed consumed, or the amount of manure produced, by one 1,000 lb cow. For example, in Alberta one animal unit may be equivalent to 1 dry dairy cow, 2 feeder steers, 5 feeder pigs, 18.2 weaners or 500 broiler chickens. Check your province for the applicable definition in your area.

### **CAFO**

Confined Animal Feeding Operation

### **CFO**

Confined Feeding Operation

### **Factory farm**

A large-scale industrial site where many animals (generally chickens, turkeys, cattle, or pigs) are confined, fed, and treated with pharmaceuticals to maximize growth and prevent disease. The animals produce much more waste than the surrounding land can handle. These operations are associated with various environmental hazards as well as cruelty to animals (*from the Sustainable Table website [www.sustainabletable.org/intro/dictionary/](http://www.sustainabletable.org/intro/dictionary/)*).

The term *Factory Farm* was first used by Ruth Harrison in her 1964 book “*Animal Machines*”—an exposé of the intensive housing of veal calves, chickens and pigs.

### **ILO**

Intensive livestock operation (or industrial livestock operation)

### **Proponent**

The person or company that is proposing to build the ILO

### **Socially responsible livestock production**

Socially responsible activities are those in which the individual(s) profiting from the activity pay(s) all the costs the activity generates and shifts none of those costs to others who will not profit from the activity. So, socially responsible farming would be farming where all the costs of the farm (air and water pollution, etc.) are contained within the farm’s boundaries and are not shifted off the farm.

### **Value chain**

A term used to describe the series of commercial transactions between primary production (on farms) to sale to the final consumer.

### **Vertical Integration**

When a corporation owns or controls two or more steps (primary production, secondary processing, bulk distribution, retail marketing) in the production-distribution system of a given product.



## Three Ways To Use This Guide

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### **On the fly**

You are faced with a situation that is developing very quickly. You need to act without delay. Print the *Checklist* and go through the steps outlined there to the best of your ability.

### **Urgent, but not in a panic**

You know that a proposal for a mega barn is in the works, but you have time to get organized. Review the checklist first. Then read each section of the guide as you take on the various tasks involved in confronting a factory farm.

### **Digging in for the long haul**

You are dealing with a long-term problem, either with a persistent proponent, or an expansion of an existing barn. Use the checklist and the written sections of the handbook as well as the in-depth resources that are listed and available on the internet or at the library.







## 2 Learn about Intensive Livestock Operations

If you aren't familiar with the issues surrounding factory farms, your first step is to educate yourself. There is a lot of information to absorb. We strongly urge you to use the web, if possible. If you don't own a computer, try your public library or see if a friend can help. And never underestimate the resourcefulness of your local reference librarian.

Be sure to get a copy of the proposed ILO application and your area bylaws as they apply to intensive livestock operations.

The following resources will help you find the information you need.

### General

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#### **Beyond Factory Farming Coalition**

The BFFC web site provides information on Canadian ILO issues. You can also call the office for information at 1-877-955-6454.

[www.beyondfactoryfarming.org](http://www.beyondfactoryfarming.org)

#### **Educational Tools**

The *Educational Tools* section of this handbook provides fact sheets and handouts to help educate yourself and others. You can copy these to distribute in your community and to hand out at meetings.

#### **Beyond Factory Farming Coalition's national email list-serve**

Join the list-serve and keep up to date on the factory farm issue and what other people are doing. Subscribe at:

[lists.riseup.net/www/info/beyondfactoryfarming](http://lists.riseup.net/www/info/beyondfactoryfarming)

#### **Talk and listen**

Speak with people who already live around factory farms. Take notes, including the dates and times you spoke with them. Read the testimonials in the *Educational Tools* section and those available online.

[www.factoryfarm.org/takingaction-testimonials.html](http://www.factoryfarm.org/takingaction-testimonials.html)

#### **Find the Decision-makers**

Find out who (which level(s) of government, which agency) has decision-making power for this ILO. There may be several layers of decision-making involved in the ILO approval. Find out not only the departments, but also the key people who will have a say over this project.

## Reading

### **Beyond Factory Farming: Corporate Hog Barns and the Threat to Public Health, the Environment, and Rural Communities**

Examines the changes resulting from industrialization of the hog sector and the effects they have on family farms, the food we eat, conditions of work, communities, and the relationship of governments to corporations and citizens. This book highlights, not just the Canadian hog sector, but structural forces at work reshaping communities and economies around the world. Available from the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives (CCPA).

[www.beyondfactoryfarming.org/english/action/books.shtml](http://www.beyondfactoryfarming.org/english/action/books.shtml)

### **The Omnivore's Dilemma**

by Michael Pollan

In this book Pollan asks, “What should we have for dinner?” He takes the reader on a journey defined by four meals produced through four production systems: industrial, big organic, beyond organic and hunter-gatherer. Pollan’s answers have profound political, economic, psychological, and even moral implications for all of us. *The Omnivore's Dilemma* promises to change the way we think about the politics and pleasure of eating.

### **Foundations of Sand: Considering the Rationale for Factory Farming**

by Dr. Bill Weida

Factory Farms have spread across the landscape of Canada and the US on a string of claims that have misled many communities. You’ve seen “*The Meatrix*”; now see why the purported benefits of factory farms are full of holes, and the reality that lies beyond the claims. (*March, 2004*)

[www.factoryfarm.org/docs/Foundations\\_of\\_Sand.pdf](http://www.factoryfarm.org/docs/Foundations_of_Sand.pdf) (pdf)

[www.factoryfarm.org/docs/Foundations\\_of\\_Sand.doc](http://www.factoryfarm.org/docs/Foundations_of_Sand.doc) (MSWord)

### **Pollution Shopping in Rural America and Canada: The myth of economic development in isolated regions**

by Dr. Bill Weida, Professor of Economics Colorado College. November, 2001

[www.factoryfarm.org/docs/Pollution\\_Shopping\\_Update.pdf](http://www.factoryfarm.org/docs/Pollution_Shopping_Update.pdf) (pdf)

[www.factoryfarm.org/docs/Pollution\\_Shopping\\_Update.doc](http://www.factoryfarm.org/docs/Pollution_Shopping_Update.doc) (MSWord)

### **Writing Off the Rural West: Globalization, Governments and the Transformation of Rural Communities.**

Edited by Roger Epp and Dave Whitson

Some of the most intense effects of globalization can be seen in rural communities. Despite a booming world economy, rural communities—and the people who work in natural-resource industries like farming, forestry, mining or fishing—have been hard hit by recent international trade agreements. This collection looks at changing rural life, across the country and around the globe. Co-published by University of Alberta Press and the Parkland Institute.



### **Dr. John Ikerd's papers**

Dr. Ikerd is Professor Emeritus of Agricultural Economics at University of Missouri, Columbia, College of Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources. He has written many accessible papers about rural communities and sustainable agriculture. Make sure to read "*The Questions Rural Communities Should Ask About CAFOs*" and "*Top Ten Reasons for Rural Communities to be concerned about Large-scale, Corporate Hog Operations*".

[www.ssu.missouri.edu/faculty/jikerd/papers/default.htm](http://www.ssu.missouri.edu/faculty/jikerd/papers/default.htm)

### **Cesspools of Shame**

Documents how animal waste from factory farms threatens human health and our nation's rivers. A wonderfully concise handbook for activists. (*Natural Resources Defense Council and Clean Water Network, July 2001*).

[www.nrdc.org/water/pollution/cesspools/cessinx.asp](http://www.nrdc.org/water/pollution/cesspools/cessinx.asp)

### **Agriculture that Makes Sense—Making Money on Hogs**

*by the Land Stewardship Project*

This publication focuses on the 50-sow hog enterprise of one Minnesota crop and livestock operation. The case study, written by LSP's Jodi Dansingburg and Doug Gunnink of the Minnesota Department of Agriculture, compares the farm's production records to the averages of the top performing hog operations as reported in the regional Minnesota Farm Business Management Program annual report. The case-study farm minimizes expenses through such production practices as outdoor farrowing and low-cost housing.

1996–8 pages. \$4.00; \$3.60—Member discount

[www.landstewardshipproject.org/resources-pubs.html](http://www.landstewardshipproject.org/resources-pubs.html)

## **Videos**

### **The Meatrix**

Is an award-winning flash animation short video on the internet that outlines the key issues of factory farming through a take-off on the science fiction film "*The Matrix*". If you would like a CD or DVD version of the film you can order it from [leo@themeatrix.com](mailto:leo@themeatrix.com).

[www.themeatrix.com](http://www.themeatrix.com)

### **Bacon, le Film**

*(National Film Board of Canada)*

Explores the social and environmental impacts of the expansion of large-scale hog farming in Quebec in the 1990s. Director Hugo Latulippe spent a year crisscrossing the province to interview the major players in the hog industry and their opponents. Originally produced in French, also available in English.

[www.cmm.onf.ca/E/titleinfo/index.epl?id=51004](http://www.cmm.onf.ca/E/titleinfo/index.epl?id=51004)

[www.nfb.ca](http://www.nfb.ca)



### **The Fight for True Farming**

In this documentary, crop and animal farmers in Quebec, the Canadian West, the US Northeast and France offer solutions to the social and environmental scourges of factory farming. Order the film or DVD from:

[www.nfb.ca](http://www.nfb.ca)

### **Earth Rescue—Hog Factories: Corporate Injustice**

*Earth Rescue*, a television program on the Outdoor Life Network, explores controversial industrial animal factories and their effects on animals and the environment (November 2001). Contact the *Beyond Factory Farming Coalition* office to get a copy.

### **And on This Farm (1998)**

The story of a Missouri community's struggle to protect their way of life in the face of expanding hog factories. To obtain a copy, please contact:

Wendy Swann at the Animal Welfare Institute

(202) 337-2332. \$15 per copy.

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=4GmOR8EthXo](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4GmOR8EthXo)

### **PEI Pork**

Farmers who raise pigs in the Maritimes have no control either over the price they receive for their pigs or the costs of producing them. Pork prices are determined by a commodity market in Chicago where the whims of big buyers and sellers fix the price for all. Small family farmers on the east coast don't stand a chance when prices fall while their transportation or heating or feed costs go up. Some P.E.I. Farmers have come up with a plan where they can escape the uncertainties of the commodity market by doing something different, and this is their story. This episode of the CBC's "*Land and Sea*" program will be available for purchase from the Nova Scotia Department of Education in July 2007. Call (902) 424-2440 or email [mediacir@ednet.ns.ca](mailto:mediacir@ednet.ns.ca).

### **Frankensteer**

*The Passionate Eye* presents *Frankensteer*, a disturbing documentary that reveals how the ordinary cow has been turned into an antibiotic-dependent, hormone-laced potential carrier of toxic bacteria, all in the name of cheaper food. *Frankensteer* exposes the harsh and sometimes frightening realities of how our beef gets to our tables. For *Frankensteer* DVD orders email:

[info@paradigmpictures.com](mailto:info@paradigmpictures.com)

### **Corporate Agriculture: The Hollow Men**

*The Nature of Things Series*

Many scientists agree that we're consuming the meat and milk of unhealthy animals. While we graze at our local meat counter deciding what to buy for dinner, more and more of these international corporate farms are developing faster and cheaper ways to get food onto our plate. This food is cheap because they don't pay for the environmental and social implications of what they're doing. This program examines how a handful of companies have come to dominate food production and distribution in North America and the real price we pay.

[www.cbc.ca/natureofthings/show\\_agriculture.html](http://www.cbc.ca/natureofthings/show_agriculture.html)



## **Apocalypse Cow**

*The Nature of Things Series*

Apocalypse Cow is a two-part story about Mad Cow Disease—a rare brain disorder of cattle that has the ability to jump species. The Mad Cow epidemic started in the United Kingdom and has spread to more than 20 countries around the world. It is also a story about cover-up and greed. *Apocalypse Cow* examines new information on the tangled history and origins of the outbreak, exploring its potential impact on human health.

[www.cbc.ca/natureofthings/show\\_apocalypsecow.html](http://www.cbc.ca/natureofthings/show_apocalypsecow.html)

## **Pig Picture**

The *Pig Picture* contains investigative footage by the Humane Farming Association. This powerful 18-minute video traces the development of commercial pig rearing in America—from the small-scale family farms of yesterday—to the corporate owned pig factories of today. Does not contain scenes of animal slaughter and is suitable for group or school showings.

To obtain a copy, contact the Humane Farming Association at (415) 485-1495. Cost is \$10 per copy in VHS or DVD.

[www.hfa.org](http://www.hfa.org)

## **Northfield, Minnesota, December 7, 2001.**

*Waterkeeper Alliance presentation*

Features Robert F. Kennedy Jr., and Rick Dove. Focuses on feedlots and factory farms, and their destruction of family farms, rivers, streams, groundwater, and animal and human health. Running time is just under 3 hours. \$25 on VHS.

*Real Life Video*

*PO Box 581703*

*Minneapolis MN*

*55458-1703*

For new and recent listings, or help obtaining copies, contact the Beyond Factory Farming Coalition offices or check the website at:

[www.beyondfactoryfarming.org/english/action/films.shtml](http://www.beyondfactoryfarming.org/english/action/films.shtml)



## Sustainable Solutions and Alternatives to Factory Farming

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It is important to have a positive vision to offer as an alternative to the factory farm proposal. Here are some resources you may find helpful:

### Books

#### **Good News for a Change: How Everyday People Are Helping the Planet**

*by Dr. David Suzuki, and Holly Dressel*

Inspiring stories about the people who are making positive environmental and social contributions to our world, illustrating the hundreds of working solutions that can help all of us to achieve a better future.

[www.greystonebooks.ca/book\\_details.asp?b=829](http://www.greystonebooks.ca/book_details.asp?b=829)

#### **Holy Cows and Hog Heaven**

*by Joel Salatin*

Tackling issues from farmer integrity to consumer kitchens to cultural cheap food policies Salatin puts producers and patrons on the same team to create a farm friendly food landscape. Ultimately empowering, “*Holy Cows and Hog Heaven*” frees every food buyer from feeling enslaved by the industrial food system. This book is for anyone who wants to see healthy farms and healthy children.

#### **Real Food for a Change**

*by Wayne Roberts, Lori Stahlbrand and Rod McRae*

A powerful tool for alleviating the growing anxiety about food, this book shows us elegantly simple solutions as home-based as the dinner table. Many books deal with the connection between diet and health. Real Food for a Change connects individual health with the health of the community, the economy and the planet. This visionary guide helps you make positive environmental and ethical decisions about how and what you eat.

### Websites

#### **Growing Hope**

A special edition of *Making Waves magazine—Summer 2006*, is available on the internet. Read the magazine for insightful analysis and examples of farms and communities that are succeeding with alternatives to industrial agriculture.

[www.cedworks.com/mw1702e\\_01.html](http://www.cedworks.com/mw1702e_01.html)

#### **Canadian Organic Growers**

COG has a large assortment of books, videos and DVDs, posters, magazines, and reference series available to order.

[www.cog.ca/otherpubs.htm](http://www.cog.ca/otherpubs.htm)



### **The Canadian Centre for Organic Agriculture**

This organization conducts, coordinates and disseminates producer-oriented research and education contributing to sustainable communities.

[www.organiccentre.ca](http://www.organiccentre.ca)

### **Canada's organic regulation**

Canada's organic regulation was adopted in 2006. For details:

[canadagazette.gc.ca/partI/2006/20060902/html/regle2-e.html](http://canadagazette.gc.ca/partI/2006/20060902/html/regle2-e.html)

### **The Falls Brook Centre**

The Falls Brook Centre aims to demonstrate that it is possible to live more lightly in our environment while contributing positively to the local economy.

[www.fallsbrookcentre.ca](http://www.fallsbrookcentre.ca)

### **SlowFood Canada**

The Slow Food movement celebrates local food as an important cultural experience.

[www.slowfood.ca](http://www.slowfood.ca)

### **Holistic Management**

Holistic Management is an approach to pastured livestock production and farm decision making that supports the health of the land as well as the economic viability of the farm and community.

[www.holisticmanagement.org/](http://www.holisticmanagement.org/)

For information about Alan Savory, the founder of holistic management, and his work, see:

[www.holisticmanagement.org/new\\_site\\_05/What/W2\\_savory.htm](http://www.holisticmanagement.org/new_site_05/What/W2_savory.htm)

### **The Grass-Fed Revolution**

This article tells about a Texas rancher's conversion from industrial to grass-fed cattle production. Published in *Time Magazine*.

[www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,1200759,00.html](http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,1200759,00.html)

### **Orion Magazine**

Orion Magazine has posted articles from well known authors including Wendell Berry.

[www.orionmagazine.org/pages/om/OrionSelect/food-agriculture.html](http://www.orionmagazine.org/pages/om/OrionSelect/food-agriculture.html)

### **The Centre for EcoLiteracy**

The Centre for EcoLiteracy has a long list of educational tools for sustainable living.

[www.ecoliteracy.org](http://www.ecoliteracy.org)

### **The Organic Consumers Association**

the OCA is based in the USA and has excellent coverage of key food and agriculture issues.

[www.organicconsumers.org](http://www.organicconsumers.org)







## The Next Step—Organize

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**Once you have information about the factory farm issue, your next step is to organize.**

First, see if other groups have already formed in your area. Dozens of grassroots organizations have sprung up over the past several years to deal with the effects of factory farming. Call the *Beyond Factory Farming Coalition* office and we can let you know if there are experienced groups in your area. Joining an already-existing group is usually easier than starting one.

**If you can't find other groups, start your own.**

If your community is unfamiliar with the factory farm issue, arrange a public informational meeting to both educate and find neighbors who are interested in helping out. You can set this up yourself or with others in your community who share your interests.

Meetings do not have to be fancy or formal—they can be as small as discussing the issues with a few neighbors. Some people gather at a local school or library; others have used barns, shops or garages. Find a place that is quiet with no distractions—no phones, no children wandering in and out, no interruptions. Restaurants, coffee shops and other commercial public places are usually poor choices unless they have private meeting rooms. If you think the meeting will last for more than an hour or two, provide refreshments or encourage everyone to bring something.

If you decide to form your own group, make every effort to maintain a working relationship with any other groups in your area. It is critically important to present a unified front of opposition to the factory farm. Consider forming an alliance of all the groups in your region—coordinate your activities and support each other. It is extremely important that people work together on this issue. Once you are organized, please contact the Beyond Factory Farming Coalition with information about your group. If you would like, we will include your group on our website.

We also encourage you to phone *Lisa Bechthold* at (403) 867-2999 or to contact the Beyond Factory Farming Coalition at [help@beyondfactoryfarming.org](mailto:help@beyondfactoryfarming.org) if you want help with organizing. Please make sure to send your full contact information, including name, address (including the province and county you live in), and telephone number, so we may contact you. In addition, the Beyond Factory Farming website, [www.beyondfactoryfarming.org](http://www.beyondfactoryfarming.org), is full of information to assist you. If you live in a rural area where connection speeds are very slow, email us at the address above and we will send you the website on a CD-ROM.

## 2—Section 3: Get Organized

If your community is already familiar with the factory farm issue, and if you already have a group of people interested in helping out, you can skip the informational meeting and start by holding an organizational get together.

### **Name your Group**

Give your group a name. This will help the media, elected officials, and the public identify you. Many groups use acronyms to identify themselves; for example, CAPER (Citizens Advocating Public Health and Environment Responsibility), or FARM (Families Against Rural Messes). Create a positive name for your group. The name you choose is important, so spend some time deciding.

### **Assign Duties**

Divide up the responsibilities so the work is shared. Overwork and burnout have been a problem with other groups, so be sensitive to members' family and work commitments. Be flexible and understanding if a member cannot fulfill their duties, and have some type of backup plan so the necessary work gets done.

### **Spokesperson**

This person communicates well and will represent the entire group. S/he must be willing to delegate work and encourage others, not dominate. S/he can be elected as the President or Chairperson of the group. This person must be comfortable with the media, and work well in public and in front of cameras. Make sure your spokesperson reads the *Media* section of this handbook too!

### **Press and media organizers**

One or more people are needed to develop relationships with the press, send out press releases, organize media events, and get as much exposure as possible for the issues. This may also be your Spokesperson. (More in the *Media* section.)

### **Officers**

Appoint people to other positions, such as secretary and treasurer and make sure they understand their responsibilities. Take notes at meetings and circulate to all, including people who could not attend.

### **Coordinators**

Select one or two people to be coordinators so group members can stay in touch and act as a team. A successful organization keeps people informed and encourages participation. Make a workable phone tree and use it to convey new information to your group. (See the *Organizing Tools* section.)



### **Researchers**

Assign people to work on gathering information and contacting local officials. Develop a list of concerns regarding the facility, including environmental, economic, health and social impacts. Issues to be considered include: water and soil contamination, air pollution from odors, gases and dusts, loss of family farmers, property devaluation, tax credits, exemptions, enterprise zones, road degradation and increased traffic. Write them down in order of importance to your group. Have members research the different objections. (Details on who to contact and what information to gather can be found in the "Gather Information" sections under "Dissect the ILO Proposal" below.)

### **Facility liaisons**

Select a couple representatives to talk with the facility operator/owner. Consider having the owner/operator attend a group meeting to hear community concerns.

### **Set up a Bank Account**

Decide how to handle finances and expenses before they arise. How will money be handled? Will each person pay a membership fee with extra money coming from fundraising efforts? Or will each person give as they see fit? Do you want to have a separate bank account for the group's money? What is your procedure when an unexpected expense occurs? How will you determine what your money will go toward? Answer these questions up front, before a situation occurs; otherwise, your group might end up with financial problems and disagreements that could undermine the organization's cohesiveness.

### **Taking Care of Business**

Determine a regular meeting time, whether it be once a week or once a month. Try to pick the same day and time - it will be easier for people to remember. Use your phone tree to remind members of each meeting a day or two in advance.

Decide whether or not your group wants to incorporate as a registered non-profit organization. As a legal entity, an incorporated association has rights and responsibilities. It can enter into contracts, buy land, borrow money, and have bank accounts, etc., in its own name. The liability of the members is limited. The continuity of the organization is assured even if the membership changes. A corporation can own property in its name regardless of membership change. It can bring a legal action in its own name (an unincorporated body cannot). Its chances of receiving government grants may increase because of the stability the organization appears to have.

An unincorporated association is an agreement between individuals, and has no legal status. The members are personally liable to the creditors for the full amount of any debts they incur on behalf of the organization. An unincorporated body cannot sue or be sued; members must sue or be sued personally. (Summarized from *Non-profit organizations* by The Public Legal Education Association of Saskatchewan.)

However some groups prefer not to incorporate for various reasons. For example, doing all the paper work required may use up valuable time when dealing with an urgent situation. An unincorporated organization may be a more difficult target for SLAPP suits and other forms of intimidation.



For an excellent resource on setting up and running an incorporated non-profit organization, see: “*Non-profit Organizations*” a free handbook published by *The Public Legal Education Association of Saskatchewan*. The handbook is available on-line at:

[www.plea.org/freepubs/npc/nonprofit.htm](http://www.plea.org/freepubs/npc/nonprofit.htm)

Keep accurate records, both business and financial. It is important to record the date and time of phone calls, meetings, etc. You may need to refer back to them at some point. Keep a contact list, spreadsheet or rolodex. To help you stay organized, keep notes from calls, meetings, etc., in a spiral bound notebook.

**Remember to celebrate your successes—no matter how small. Plan for some fun along the way in order to keep from burning out.**

## ***Reading Materials About Organizing***

### **How to Save the World in your Spare Time**

*by Elizabeth May*

A practical guide based on “How to be an Activist” workshops for grassroots organization led by May while she was executive director of the Sierra Club of Canada. The book includes sections on basic organizing, lobbying, using the courts, fundraising, media and public mobilization. Published by *Key Porter Books*, 2006.

### **Boundaries of Home: Mapping for Local Empowerment**

*by Doug Aberley*

Whether opposing a clearcut or toxic dump, participating in local planning or zoning, or trying to learn more about your own region, *Boundaries of Home* will help you find, use and create the maps that are right for you. Using overlays, tapestries and stories, communities can map what’s crucial to them: water and air flows, commuting patterns, distribution of species, local history. Includes a step-by-step description of how to use accessible sources to compile truly empowering images of one’s home.

[www.newsociety.com/bookid/3669](http://www.newsociety.com/bookid/3669)

### **Organizing for Social Change**

*by Kim Bobo, Jackie Kendall, Steve Max*

Chapters include: The fundamentals of direct action organizing; developing a strategy; organizing models; the underlying structure of organization; using the media; building and joining coalitions; developing leadership; working with religious organizations and with unions; public speaking; working with community organization boards; on line research and tactical investigation; grass roots fundraising; supervision; administrative systems; the new economy. Order your copy from:

*Seven Locks Press*

*P.O. Box 25689*

*Santa Ana, CA*

*92799*



**The Troublemakers Teaparty: A Manual for Effective Citizen Action**

*by Charles Dobson*

Thousands of small groups with few resources spend large amounts of time trying to influence decision-makers. For the most part, these groups are made up of ordinary citizens driven by a desire to make a difference beyond their own lives. Governments and corporations call these people “troublemakers.” Those who study complex problems ranging from health care to global warming say we need far more troublemakers, far more active citizens. Order your copy online or write to:

*New Society Publishers*

*P.O. Box 189*

*Gabriola Island, B.C.*

*Canada, VoR 1X0*

**[www.newsociety.com/bookid/3823](http://www.newsociety.com/bookid/3823)**







## 4 Organize Your Community

### **What to do before any meeting**

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Organizing the members of your community will involve many meetings of different sizes and for different purposes. Here are some guidelines that will apply to any meeting you hold.

#### **Logistics**

Set the date, time, and place. If you are planning to use a community hall make sure you book it and know who is going to open the doors to let people in.

#### **Decide on an agenda.**

*(See the Organizing Tools section for a sample.)*

Write down the items you wish to cover and print copies of the agenda for anyone helping out—this will help you focus and keep the group on track. Make sure to bring the agenda with you to the meeting! Your agenda can cover information you've already found out about the operation, a background on the factory farm issue in general, and a brief talk about what you would like to accomplish by creating a group.

Keep your agenda short. Focus on a few main points so you don't overwhelm the audience. Set up time toward the end of the meeting for a question and answer (Q&A) period. Use this time for issues not on the agenda. If, during the meeting, anyone strays, let them know you will address their questions or concerns during the Q&A session. If you cannot answer a question, simply say you will get back to them with an answer (and make sure that you do). Move on to the next question.

#### **Chairing**

The chairperson or moderator has to keep the meeting on track, maintain order and build confidence in your group among people attending the meeting. The person chairing the meeting does not have to be the most knowledgeable person in your group, but he or she needs to be self-confident and assertive.

#### **Ground rules**

Establish a few ground rules for the meeting. For example: no interrupting while someone else is speaking, no personal attacks, being acknowledged by the facilitator by raising your hand, no repeating what's already been said, etc. The organizer is responsible for making sure the stated guidelines are followed. For this reason it is a good idea to have a moderator who will keep everyone on track.

### **Target audience**

Determine who you want at your meeting. For a public meeting, you want as many people as possible. If you are developing strategy, you only want core members of your group. Determine your audience from the start—that will help determine the agenda, who's invited, the type of advertising, etc.

Have a table by the door to the meeting. Put a sign-in list, handouts and fact sheets on the table. (See the *Organizing Tools* section.)

### **Notes**

Take notes at all your meetings. Make sure someone in your group agrees to write the notes. These notes will be a record of the decisions made and form an important document of your group's history. Make copies of the notes for members of your group, and keep a complete set of notes from all your meetings in one place for future reference.

### **Recording meetings**

Consider having the presentations at your public meetings videotaped or taped on cassette. Clearly label the tapes of your meetings and include them in your files—do not record over them! Determine a policy with regard to taping. Some groups have had great success and have held officials accountable for promises made and then broken. Other groups have found taping to inhibit group members from speaking up. If you do tape, inform everyone who will be recorded.

Have someone speak who has experience fighting factory farms or someone who has experienced the impacts of living near a factory farm. They can share insight on their successes, failures, and experiences. Contact the *Beyond Factory Farming Coalition* for help in finding someone suitable. If someone cannot make it to a meeting, have them write a testimonial letter that you can read aloud at the meeting.

### **Advertising**

Get the word out to as many as people as possible. Here are some excellent ways to publicize your meeting:

- Phone your neighbors
- Type up a simple, one-page bulletin, voicing your concerns and inviting people to the meeting. Post on supermarket bulletin boards, schools, libraries, or any public place that has a bulletin board.
- Place your flyers (with permission) at the checkout stand of the local grocery store, café, or bar. Include your contact information on all flyers or bulletins so people can phone with questions.
- Advertise in your local paper at least twice.
- For public meetings, call your local radio and television stations and see if they do PSAs (public service announcements). CBC radio stations have an automated system where you can record your announcement over the phone.



## Your First Public Informational Meeting

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Use this meeting to educate your community on the factory farm issue and motivate them to help you confront the factory farm.

- Invite your public officials and let them know that they do not have to answer questions but that you will save them a seat with their name on it (have chairs set up in the front row with the names of public officials displayed on the back. That way, you know who doesn't show up). If the fear of being put on the spot keeps them away, let people at the meeting know up front that public officials are there as spectators only.
- Have someone who will be unbiased as the moderator. This person will ensure the meeting follows the agenda, that no one is disrespectful to anyone else, and handle comments and questions.
- As people arrive, ask them to fill out the sign-in sheet. Provide space for their name, address, telephone number, email, and a section for people to volunteer. Leave the sheet on a table by the door, with a big sign. Mention the sign-up sheet at the end of the meeting, for anyone who arrives late or forgets to sign up. Tell the audience that signing up does not commit them to being part of the group, but you will contact them in the future. Be sure to assign someone in your group to pick up the sign-up sheet at the end of the meeting.
- Handing out copies of the agenda is optional. Whether you distribute it or not, read the agenda to everyone in attendance at the beginning of the meeting. Post a copy at the sign-in table.
- Provide information on the table about factory farms and their impacts, including material people can take home. Consider making a poster with visuals of local factory farms. Pictures can be enlarged to 11 x 17 so people can see them better. If you do not have access to materials, print information from the *Beyond Factory Farming Coalition* website and make copies. (See the *Educational Tools* section)

### During the meeting

- Show one of the videos recommended in the "Educate Yourself" section.
- Have any presenters talk about the social, environmental, and economic impacts of factory farms. You may wish to have experts like soil specialists, microbiologists, economists, water quality experts, etc., on hand. Find local experts who are established and familiar with your area. Try your nearest university. Please note that agriculture departments at universities can be heavily funded by agribusiness, so they might not be much help. You can try the Biological Sciences department. Know where presenters stand on the factory farm issue before you invite them to speak.
- If possible, have someone speak who lives next to a factory farm. If you can't find someone to speak in person, film them or get written statements about their experiences. A selection of testimonials can be found in the *Educational Tools* section.
- Have a jar where people can make donations to cover costs.
- At the close of the meeting, set a date and time for a follow-up meeting. Hand out a bulletin summarizing your concerns. Make sure to include your name and contact information on the flyer.

## Your First Organizational Meeting

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This meeting will help organize your community and determine what work needs to be done. You might need several meetings before you can assign all the work listed below, so be careful not to overload your members.

Invite everyone who attended your public informational meeting. Post flyers around town and advertise in your local paper—there might be interested people who could not attend or did not see previous information.

When developing the agenda for your organizational meeting, divide creative items that need discussion into three parts—brainstorming, evaluating and deciding. During the brainstorming process, anything goes; no matter how unusual an idea might seem, do not judge or criticize—just record it on paper. Sometimes the most unique ideas are the catalyst for the one that ends up being successful. Place an easel with large sheets of paper at the front of the room and write the ideas down. During the evaluating phase, participants discuss the ideas and rank them in order of importance. During the decision phase, the group agrees on which ideas to pursue.

## Communications and Outreach

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### Develop an overall action plan

Develop a timeline so you can anticipate what is going to happen in the future. Map out the known and estimated dates for key decisions or deadlines. Assess the kinds of activities that will be required over the next several months based on the season, the requirements of the project, the approval process requirements, etc. Include other significant and relevant dates and events such as elections, conventions, community events, etc. Once you have a picture of what will or might happen, and when, you can develop a strategy for intervening, getting publicity, influencing decisions, etc. Review and update the timeline every few months and adjust your strategy accordingly.

### Develop a petition listing the reasons you are opposed to the facility

There are two ways to use petitions depending on the results you wish to obtain. One would be used more as a media or political tool to demonstrate support for your cause. The other is a document which would have legal standing depending on the laws in the part of Canada where you are located. Legal petitions require very specific language and signatures must conform to specific requirements. Ask your local MLA, MNA or MPP for the applicable petition format for your province.

In some provinces there are specific types of petitions that are legally binding on the councils of local municipalities. Check with your local administrator or the provincial department in charge of municipalities to find out if this applies in your municipality.



Even with informal petitions, restrict signers to those 18 years of age and older who live within the county or municipality. This gives the petition more credibility. Ask for volunteers to go to your local shopping area, Main Street, or other high traffic areas to get signatures. If you know storeowners sympathetic to your cause, see if you can leave petitions in their store. Don't forget to pick them up!

If you're short on time, place the petition in your local paper. A large ad that people can cut out and mail to you is a great way to get people's attention. Run the ad at least twice, in case people miss it the first time.

The petition itself probably won't stop the factory farm but it can let facility owners, as well as local and provincial government officials, see this is a community problem and not just one person's complaint. This is also a good way to collect names and addresses of people interested in the issue. Never throw away your petitions, no matter how much time passes. They can be used in different ways, such as at a news conference or as a tool in testimony to help pass a local resolution against a factory farm.

### **Build coalitions**

Speak with members of your community; try to both educate them and get them to join your organization. Make connections with other groups in your area. Get them to support your cause or at least distribute information to their members. Here is a list of possible groups to get you started:

- Clubs (garden, book, sports, fishing)
- Consumers
- Environmental
- Fall Fair
- Food Co-ops
- Local chapters of national groups
- Neighborhood groups
- Political and Governmental
- Professional Associations (medical, business, etc.)
- Religious
- Senior Citizen's groups
- School Associations (Home and School, alumni)
- Unions
- Wildlife Associations
- Women's
- Youth and Student (4H, college)



### **Create a flyer or brochure**

Use quick facts, quotes from testimonials, or any of the information you gather in order to explain the potential impact on your community. Always use credible and documented facts. Keep a file of all your sources; this is advisable even if you footnote your brochure. Distribute to individuals, groups and elected officials. Find sympathetic places, like restaurants or stores that will put out your information. Mass mail to your surrounding community. You can find facts in the *Educational Tools* section handouts and on the internet at:

[www.factoryfarm.org/facts/](http://www.factoryfarm.org/facts/)

[www.beyondfactoryfarming.org/english/action/downloads.shtml](http://www.beyondfactoryfarming.org/english/action/downloads.shtml)

### **Establish a list-serve**

Establish your own list-serve (email list) to distribute information. Go to [groups.yahoo.com](http://groups.yahoo.com) or [lists.riseup.net](http://lists.riseup.net) to register and start a list-serve for no charge. Assign one person to post short, weekly updates on what the group is doing. Each member must keep up to date with activities. If a member does not have access to a computer, develop a phone system where s/he can contact one or two people for updates.

### **Create a website**

It's a great way to get information to your community and a good resource for the media. If you create one, email the web address to *Beyond Factory Farming* at [info@beyondfactoryfarming.org](mailto:info@beyondfactoryfarming.org)—we'll link to your site. Web sites can become very expensive if you pay someone to design and upkeep them, so try to find a volunteer with web experience—or teach yourself. Many email accounts offer free web space and often have simple tutorials on how to create a site.

### **Meet with your Elected Officials**

Set up meetings with local elected officials, including provincial and national representatives. See the *Organizing Tools* section for tips on arranging a meeting. Remember that unless elected officials (local and provincial) hear from you, they will assume that nothing is wrong. The proponents will be lobbying for their cause so make sure you do the same. Remember, “the squeaky wheel gets the grease”.

### **Letters of Concern**

Submit letters of concern to local and regional government officials. Keep a copy for your files and give a copy to others in your group so they can also submit similar letters. People who might not be inclined to get involved publicly might still be interested in sending a letter of support for your concerns.

### **Learn from Others**

Collect testimonials from people living near a factory farm. Use them at meetings, news conferences, hearings, etc. They are very effective. Hearing someone's personal story about what its like living near a factory farm is extremely effective in helping people understand the issues. (See the *Educational Tools* section.) For more examples:

[www.factoryfarm.org/takingaction-testimonials.html](http://www.factoryfarm.org/takingaction-testimonials.html)



## Raise Funds

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You will need money to effectively carry out your campaign, but the amount needed can vary greatly from group to group. Try to estimate how much money you think you'll need for your campaign, but be realistic about your budget and how much money you think you can raise. Don't let a lack of money stop you—usually a little bit of cash and a lot of people power is just as effective as a lot of cash.

If your group has adequate time to mount an effective campaign against the establishment of a factory farm, access to money will play a major role. You will require funds for activities such as:

- town hall meetings
- public events
- tabloids/posters/visual aids
- legal fees
- hiring experts (or covering traveling and accommodation costs)
- environmental monitoring
- radio/television/newspaper advertisements

### ***Short term funding***

If your group has limited time to prevent the permitting of a factory farm, raising money may not be necessary, or if it is, will need to be done informally as you go along.

It is best to assign an individual in your group the responsibility of fundraising chair. This person should be well known and respected in your community and not afraid to ask directly for a donation. Given that you have limited time to influence decision-makers, asking for money directly is the quickest way to raise money. It is important that your group establishes a comprehensive list of names (family, close friends, colleagues at work, members of similar organizations, community leaders and philanthropists) to approach and that the fundraising chair follows through. If you hold a community event, be sure to pass the hat around for donations.



## ***Long term funding***

If you have a longer period to organize, you may want to set up a fundraising committee and develop a campaign budget. Once you have established what items you wish to spend money on, there are many innovative ways to raise money, such as:

- bingos, auctions, garage sales, dinners, bake sales, benefits/socials
- create and sell items such as t-shirts, pins, and coffee mugs
- create a comprehensive database and mailing list and send out a letter of appeal to those who would support your cause
- door to door canvass
- an information/campaign tabloid with a cut-out box which allows the reader to easily send money in support of your campaign

A couple of communities recorded a song about factory farming—one had their song go to number one on the music charts in their area! All money raised from these activities can go toward your campaign.

Sometimes it is easier to raise money if your group has charitable status, as donors will want to take advantage of income tax exemptions. Obtaining your own charitable tax status is often a lengthy and difficult process and will require that your group is formally incorporated as a registered non-profit organization. Information about obtaining charitable status is available from Canada Revenue Agency at [www.cra-arc.gc.ca/E/pub/tg/t4063/t4063-01e.pdf](http://www.cra-arc.gc.ca/E/pub/tg/t4063/t4063-01e.pdf)

As another possibility, you may want to approach a well-established environmental non-government organization (ENGO) in your region that has a charitable number and ask them to partner with you. Established organizations with charitable status are cautious with who they partner with, as Revenue Canada allows registered charitable organizations to use a maximum of 10% of their total budget for advocacy purposes. However, such partnerships can provide legal support, educational pamphlets and research that would support your cause.



## **Applying for Grants**

Whether you have a charitable number, are partnering with an organization that has one, or just exist as a registered non-profit organization, you may want to write grant proposals for specific elements of your campaign. There are a number of public and private foundations across the country that may support you.

### **The Sustainability Network**

A Canadian organization devoted to helping environmental groups build their own capacity. Its website links to many useful resources. As well, the organization holds workshops on fundraising among other things. Phone 416-324-2792 if you don't use the internet.

[www.sustain.web.ca/](http://www.sustain.web.ca/)

### **The Canadian Environmental Grantmakers Network**

CEGN lists most of the foundations in Canada that fund environmental initiatives.

[www.cegn.org/main.html](http://www.cegn.org/main.html)

### **The Community Foundations of Canada**

CFC is an umbrella agency for smaller community foundations in Canada.

[www.cfc-fcc.ca](http://www.cfc-fcc.ca)

### **Philanthropic Foundations of Canada**

There are many private foundations in Canada. The Philanthropic Foundations of Canada is the umbrella agency.

[www.pfc.ca](http://www.pfc.ca)

### **Stewardship Canada**

Stewardship Canada lists funders that support land stewardship.

[www.stewardshipcanada.ca](http://www.stewardshipcanada.ca).

Each foundation will have its own guidelines for submitting applications and timelines to follow. Remember, grant making is a long term strategy and grants will usually take 1 to 4 months to turn around.

Many books have been written on the subject of fundraising. See, for example, *Grassroots grants: an activist's guide to grantseeking* by Andy Robinson (*San Francisco, CA. Jossey-Bass c 2004*). There are many guides to writing effective grants on the web. If you do not have access to the Internet, try your library or local bookstore.







## *Extra! Extra! Read All About It!*

Press is vitally important to any campaign or strategy. The press you get—or don't get—can determine your success or failure. Spend time educating yourself about public relations and how to get effective press—it will save a lot of time and headaches in the long run.

*(From GRACE's "How to Confront a Factory Farm" at [www.factoryfarm.org](http://www.factoryfarm.org))*

This chapter is designed to give you practical tips for working with the news media. At the end of each section there is a list of useful links, each of which will help your group further develop an effective communication strategy.

### **Communicate with the media and build relationships with reporters and editors**

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Here are some simple guidelines that will give you a better shot at getting your story in the headlines.

#### **Be a Resource for Journalists**

Reporters are busy people who work on tight deadlines. Hand your story to them on a plate by fleshing out the “Who, What, Where, When, Why, and How” of your issue/event. Send the information directly to a reporter who covers related issues or include it in a press release. You will increase your chances of getting coverage if your story is pre-packaged and ready for the reporter to use.

Remember to be clear and concise, especially since many media outlets do not have a full-time environmental beat reporter and therefore will not be up-to-date on your issue.

- |                                |  |   |
|--------------------------------|--|---|
| ✓ <b>Be available</b>          | ✓ <b>Know your facts</b>                     | ✓ <b>Avoid overdoing it—only call when you have something to say.</b> |
| ✓ <b>Be ready to be quoted</b> | ✓ <b>Know where to find information fast</b> | ✓ <b>Respond to factual errors</b>                                    |
| ✓ <b>Know your issue</b>       | ✓ <b>Know their deadlines</b>                |   |

## Make Your Story Newsworthy

*Note: The following information is taken primarily from The Institute for Media, Policy and Civil Society*

Reporters will more likely bite the bait if there is, for example, new relevant research, a new political development, or new community concerns at the heart of your story. If you are staging an event, consider using the tips below in order to pique a reporter's (and a photographer's) interest.

Be sure to give your story "legs" (i.e., there is enough there for a reporter to continue covering developments and different angles of the same issue). By doing so, you will ensure further coverage and increase the likelihood of people following your issue.

### Characteristics of a newsworthy event

- |              |   |   |
|--------------|---|---|
| ✓ Novelty    | ✓ Social issues or prominent public figure involved | ✓ Bright props and images                           |
| ✓ Shock      |   | ✓ News stories about the event published in advance |
| ✓ Conflict   | ✓ Humor   |   |
| ✓ Simplicity | ✓ Outdoors  |   |
| ✓ Kids       | ✓ Action  | ✓ Local impact                                      |

### Frame Your Issue

Decide the focus of your story (health issues, pollution, or community integrity for example). Trying to make too many points will be confusing and not make good news. Stick to one simple and concise point.

### Localize your story

Remember that readers are always more interested in a story when it has a direct impact on their everyday lives.

### Feature community members in your story

(i.e., Mr. Green whose health has deteriorated since the construction of a factory farm down the road) in addition to the usual characters (politicians, and "experts," for example).

### "Piggy-backing"

Consider piggy-backing your issue to other political events, like elections or previous campaign promises. What are the financial issues? Is taxpayers' money being wasted? Are jobs being lost? Are the environmentally sound alternatives better for the economy? (They usually are.) Make it interesting to someone who "doesn't give a hydro-electric dam".

### Collaborate

Consider teaming up with other local community groups. Showing collaboration between groups helps to reinforce the importance of the issue to the community and will give your group more legitimacy.

### **Prepare Spokespeople**

Make sure your spokespeople are available!

- Select two people to be media spokespeople. Having two will ensure that there is always someone available to speak with reporters.
- Leave more than one method of contacting spokespeople: cell phone numbers, office numbers, home numbers, email addresses and pagers. Keep ringers turned on!

### **Be engaging**

Those representing your issue should be well-versed and comfortable speaking in front of cameras and in high pressure situations.

### **Not every question has to be answered**

Repeat the message you want to be heard if an irrelevant question is asked.

### **Be comfortable saying “no.”**

If the story is potentially damaging to your organization then politely decline.

### **Be on the ball!**

Be sure to always call reporters back, especially to follow up, correct misquotes, or fill in missing information.

- If you are unable to talk to reporters when they call, ask for their story deadline and get back to them before that date or time.
- Refer them to someone else for more information or a quote if that proves helpful for both you and them.

## ***Resources***

### **Sierra Club of Canada**

Former director of the *Sierra Club of Canada* Elizabeth May lays out strategies for confronting environmental issues, with details on how to work with the press to get your voice heard in mainstream media.

[www.sierraclub.ca/national/activist-how-to/how-to-be-activist.html](http://www.sierraclub.ca/national/activist-how-to/how-to-be-activist.html)

### **The Institute for Media, Policy, and Civil Society (IMPACS)**

A bilingual set of downloadable resources including how to develop effective communication skills, tips on preparing to speak with reporters, checklists for spokespeople, tips on how to develop a strategic communications plan for not-for-profit organizations, and details on how and when to use various media tools.

[www.impacs.org/communications/PubResources/](http://www.impacs.org/communications/PubResources/)

*(Note: IMPACS has ceased operations but at the time of publication their website was still active.)*

### **Making the News: A Guide for Nonprofits and Activists**

by Jason Salzman. Published by Westview Press, 2003.

### **A Media Handbook for Creating Social Change**

by The Center for Reproductive Law and Policy

[www.crlp.org/pdf/mediaguide.pdf](http://www.crlp.org/pdf/mediaguide.pdf)

## Press Releases and Press Conferences

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A good press release is your group's way of alerting the news media of your story. Crafting a press release is a skill that will come in handy when trying to get your issue or event covered. There are a few critical tips that will help save your press release from being tossed into the newsroom trash bin.

Your press release should read like a news story, not like your group's manifesto. It should be no more than one page long. Include quotes from group representatives. Be sure to include phone numbers so that reporters can call to get more details and re-work your press release into their own story. Send your release in time to ensure it reaches the media before or on your release date. If you are far from a media centre, you can fax your release, or phone it in to the closest office of the Canadian Press (CP). CP is a wire service. If it puts your story on their service, it will automatically reach television, radio and newspaper newsrooms. It is then the decision of the news director in each outlet whether to use your story.

### Pages to Include in a Press Kit

- Cover letter or memo
- Press release
- Fact sheets or background information on different aspects of the issue
- A sheet with quotes that explains your cause
- A question and answer sheet that explains the issue in an easy-to-read way
- Copies of other newspaper articles that explain your issue well
- Charts, visuals or photographs
- Background biography on your organization's expert on the topic
- A page that explains your organization and what it does
- Business card or card with your spokesperson's name and daytime phone number, along with name and address of your organization for a reporter to have at hand

### Writing a Press Release

- Write a strong, catchy headline up to 4 sentences in length
- Include key information (who, what, where, when, and why).
- Keep each paragraph short (1-3 sentences)
- Keep the entire release to *one* page maximum
- At the bottom of the page write "-30-" or "###" (indicates that anything above the mark can be published as is)
- Be creative! Print your group's letterhead and use bright coloured paper (ex: if your issue concerns water, print on blue paper)



## Timing

To ensure the best coverage, choose the best time for launching your story. Consider:

- Mondays through Thursdays between 10 am and 2 pm is the prime time for reporters being on the job and looking for news.
- Consider hosting a strong, visual event around 5 pm or 10 pm for local live broadcasts.
- Avoid Fridays! Saturday's broadcast news has fewer viewers and the newspapers generally have less space for stories.
- If you are holding a weekend event consider planning for Sunday to get coverage that night and the next day.

## Media Advisories

When your group is planning an event, use this tool to alert the press. Similar to a press releases except that they are used to announce an event and have the "5 W's" (Who, What, Where, When, and Why?) written down the left hand column to clearly outline what your group is planning.

## Hold a press conference

It is a great way to get attention, but only hold one if you have a newsworthy story and have an acknowledged expert who normally wouldn't be available. Hold press conferences somewhere that is familiar and convenient to the media. Try to avoid having to spend money to rent space. Is there a good community centre close to the downtown? Can you get the help of someone in City Council to use City Hall or the Regional Government Centre? Also, consider handing out leaflets with key information listed so reporters can refer to it in their stories and avoid misquoting you. See the *Media Tools* section for more tips.

- ✓ **Tip: Always follow up press releases with a phone call.**



## Writing letters to the editor and Op-Ed pieces

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Letters to the editor are one of the most widely read sections of print media. They are useful in that they can be quick to write, and are published without being heavily edited and interpreted. Use them when you are responding directly to a news story that has been published recently (or not published). Check out the paper you will be submitting to for the length of an existing letter to the editor, and use that as a guideline to avoid having key information cut by the editor. Often daily newspapers have a 300 word limit for letters.

Writing an Op-ed (or opinion editorial) is another excellent, unmediated way of voicing your group's opinion in a subjective manner. In this section, readers expect to hear people's blatant opinions and create dialogue on hot issues. Op-Ed sections are often read by influential people in the community and will likely get them thinking (and hopefully, acting) on your issue. If nothing else, writing op-eds helps to build your group's profile.

When submitting your piece, be sure to:

- Limit the number of points you make
- Avoid being overly emotional
- Include a cover letter with contact information
- Follow up your submission with a phone call. Don't be shy to ask if your piece will be published, and if not, why, so that you can be better prepared for the next try.

Also consider gathering a few individuals from your group and schedule a visit to the editor or the editorial board of your local newspaper. Sit down with them and explain why this is an important issue and why the paper should support your position in its editorials. Make sure to bring a press kit to leave behind with the editor(s).

*See the Media Section for a sample op-ed.*

### Resources

- *How to Save the World in your Spare Time* by Elizabeth May  
A practical guide based on “How to be an Activist” workshops for grassroots organization led by May while she was executive director of the Sierra Club of Canada. The book includes sections on basic organizing, lobbying, using the courts, fundraising, media and public mobilization. Published by Key Porter Books, 2006.
- Refer to the *Sierra Club of Canada's* resource as listed under “*Learn how to communicate with the media*”.  
**[www.sierraclub.ca/national/activist-how-to/how-to-be-activist.html](http://www.sierraclub.ca/national/activist-how-to/how-to-be-activist.html)**
- The *David Suzuki Foundation* is an excellent resource with step by step tips on how to write a letter to the editor, and provides contact information for major national daily papers as well as some provincial papers.  
**[www.davidsuzuki.org/Take\\_Action/Letters.asp](http://www.davidsuzuki.org/Take_Action/Letters.asp)**



## How to Find Press

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The best press outlets to target are prominent newspapers, television stations and radio programs in your area, as well as the local weeklies and the agriculture media. For the web savvy, check out online alternative media—a great way of reaching people! The following resources will help you find media outlets locally and nationally.

### Local Libraries

Local and regional public libraries are a gold mine for recent and archived news publications. Ask librarians about the range of publications they have shelved and how you can get access to them. Knowing which papers (and which reporters) cover related issues, and how they cover them will only make you better prepared.

### The David Suzuki Foundation

This web site provides tips on effective letter writing as well as a list of national and provincial media contacts.

[www.davidsuzuki.org/Take\\_Action/Letters.asp](http://www.davidsuzuki.org/Take_Action/Letters.asp)

### IndependentMedia.ca

A Directory of Non-Corporate Journalism and a comprehensive list of non-corporately owned media including television, print, radio, and on-line sources. Includes links to regional independent media centers.

[independentmedia.ca](http://independentmedia.ca)

### Online News

- *Rabble* is an online, not for profit media source, run by journalists and artists, which prides itself on providing progressive points of view on a diversity of issues.  
[www.rabble.ca](http://www.rabble.ca)
- *The Tyee*—an independent alternative daily newspaper reaching every corner of B.C. and beyond.  
[thetyee.ca](http://thetyee.ca)
- *The Dominion: Canada's Grassroots Newspaper*  
[dominionpaper.ca](http://dominionpaper.ca)



## Points to Remember and Ideas to Try

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### To make your press more effective, you might want to try the following ideas:

- Every time you do something, you should alert the press. If you're holding a public meeting, invite the press. If you're having a fundraiser, invite the press. If a local official does something you don't agree with, alert the press.
- Take out an ad in the local paper with a list of the public concerns. Include contact information and phone numbers of elected officials. Remember to take the ad out more than once in case someone misses it the first time.
- Create a local web site or a blog and publicize it to the media. One group did a press release about their new site and many media outlets published information on it.
- Find out if any local universities or colleges have newspapers and/or radio stations. If so, develop a relationship with the people there and try to get them involved in the issue. Make sure to send all press releases to them. Try to interest journalism students in writing articles about the ILO and getting them published in the paper. University students can be a great resource. You may also want to try doing the same with the local community or co-operative radio stations, if there happens to be one in your area.
- Use people of all ages from your group to represent you. The younger and older, the better. Recently, 11 and 12-year-old youngsters made a trip to the Canadian Minister of Agriculture to express their concerns. This resulted in extensive media coverage.
- Avoid personal verbal attacks on public officials or the owner or operator of the proposed facility. Do not raise your voice or show anger in public.
- Work constantly to get the group's message out to the public. For example, encourage different people to write letters to newspaper commentary sections, have everyone in your group phone radio shows, talk shows, ask questions at community meetings, etc. Better yet, have spokespeople get booked as guests on local radio stations.
- Just as you need to prepare information booklets or packets of material for elected officials in order to educate them on the issue, you need to do the same for reporters. Don't assume local officials, or the press, understand the problems with factory farms. Gather information on the impacts of ILOs from the *Beyond Factory Farming* web site [www.beyondfactoryfarming.org](http://www.beyondfactoryfarming.org) and educate others by speaking with and distributing information to them. Make sure your local government administrator has copies so information can be put on file for public access.
- It is very important to clip and save all news stories about the ILO. File month by month. This can be useful in verifying promises made and promises broken. Do not throw the clippings away.
- Create a group name and logo. Use them in stories and at events.
- Use creative techniques like street theatre to grab the media's attention and get people of all ages involved.
- Announce events with public service announcements (PSAs). Media outlets provide this free service to community groups wishing to advertise their events. Your local radio stations, for example, will likely have an answering machine designated to record community announcements (such as information sessions, rallies, etc.) that they will later air, sometimes several times leading up to the event.



## **6 Dissect the ILO Proposal**

### **Gather Information—Where to Look**

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You will need to understand the proposal itself, as well as the economic, social, geographic and environmental situation surrounding the it. Gather information about the area, the proposed project and the by-laws, rules and regulations that apply to it. Look for the information at:

#### ***Local Sources***

- Land Titles Office
- Municipality, County, Municipal District, Planning District, Zoning Commission

#### **Find any by-laws and/or resolutions for:**

- planning
- zoning
- health
- manure management
- ILO permitting
- environmental protection

#### ***Provincial Sources:***

- Department of Health or Office of Chief Medical Health Officer
- Department Environment
- Department of Natural Resources
- Department of Industry
- Department of Water Conservation/Stewardship
- Department of Agriculture
- Conservation Districts or Watershed Authorities

## **Federal Sources**

Currently the federal government provides limited oversight for ILO development, however many of the agencies listed below will provide technical and research materials.

- National Water Research Institute [www.nwri.ca](http://www.nwri.ca)
- Geological Survey of Canada <http://gsc.nrcan.gc.ca>
- Environment Canada [www.ec.gc.ca](http://www.ec.gc.ca)
- Department of Fisheries and Oceans [www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca](http://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca)
- Natural Resources Canada [www.nrcan-rncan.gc.ca](http://www.nrcan-rncan.gc.ca)
- National Research Council [www.nrc-cnrc.gc.ca](http://www.nrc-cnrc.gc.ca)
- Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada [www.agr.gc.ca](http://www.agr.gc.ca)
- Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration (PFRA) [www.agr.gc.ca/pfra/](http://www.agr.gc.ca/pfra/)
- Canadian Food and Inspection Agency [www.inspection.gc.ca](http://www.inspection.gc.ca)
- Canadian Environment Assessment Agency/Canadian Environmental Assessment Registry [www.ceaa-acee.gc.ca](http://www.ceaa-acee.gc.ca)
- Public Health Agency of Canada [www.phac-aspc.gc.ca](http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca)

## **Statistics Canada**

Statistics Canada is a rich source of data on many aspects of agriculture, communities, economics and the environment with links to statistics on various topics.

[www.statcan.ca/start.html](http://www.statcan.ca/start.html)

- “*The Daily*” provides short reports with current statistics on a variety of topics.  
[www.statcan.ca/english/dai-quo/](http://www.statcan.ca/english/dai-quo/)

## **Maps**

- Map of Very Large Farms in Canada  
<http://tinyurl.com/2sa5gb>
- A Geographical Profile of Manure Production in Canada  
<http://tinyurl.com/yw3qtd>
- Google Maps—An internet tool that provides maps, satellite photos and a combination of the two for detailed information about any given location.  
<http://maps.google.com/>

## What to Look for—Logistical and Local Information

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Once you are familiar with the local laws and permitting rules required in your province and municipality, county or planning district, you will need to review the factory farm proposal for its consistency with the applicable laws, regulations and guidelines.

It is important to involve as many volunteers and neighbors as possible who are familiar with the surrounding geography in your area so as to identify any weak points in the proposal. Local ecological knowledge plays an important role in helping your group identify errors in the proposal. Do not assume that the information supplied by the proponent is correct. Also, assume that your provincial government agencies are supportive of the project and will provide minimal support and information to those who oppose the development.

Errors in the proposal can be used to enhance your strategy and weaken the integrity of the proposal and the credibility of the proponent.

### ***Things to know—General background information***

- name of developer
- type of facility (hog, dairy, feedlot, poultry)
- number of animals proposed at facility
- number of animal units proposed
- municipality (or county) facility is proposed in
- time frame (key dates for hearings, meeting, deadlines, appeals etc.)

### ***Proximity***

How close is this proposal to nearby residents and different community entities and infrastructure, including:

- nearest city/town
- nearest freeway and local roads to be used
- nearest feed mill
- nearby residences, businesses, schools, day care centres, nursing homes, churches, tourism sites, recreation areas
- nearest hospital



## ***Local regulations***

Find out about any local government by-law or regulation that may apply to agriculture. Local approvals are usually required for any type of proposed development. A factory farm may be designated as discretionary/conditional use or as a permitted use within your community's planning scheme. Depending on the province, local decision-making will be required if the ILO is designated as a discretionary/conditional use. Find the following information:

- minimum setback distances
- county/municipal resolutions dealing with ILOs
- township/planning district resolutions
- development plans and ILO policies
- zoning and land use by-laws
- other bylaws that may be applicable (i.e., waste disposal, health)
- public notification procedure triggered by proposal
- appeal process for local decisions





## **7 Assess The ILO's Potential Impact On The Water, Land And Air**

### **Water**

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#### ***How will this factory farm affect the water resource in the area/region?***

##### **Identify, locate and/or describe:**

- all surface waters near manure application sites and manure storage site(s)
- nearest intermittent stream and/or drainage ditch
- downstream surface water bodies that may suffer from the over-application of nutrients
- potential for area to become flooded in heavy rain fall events or spring run-off
- nearby drinking water sources (wells and surface water)
- abandoned or uncapped wells on site or in land to be used for manure spreading
- sinkholes, mining sites or gravel pits in the vicinity
- information regarding aquifers (capacity, quality of water, direction of flow, recharge areas)
- source water protection plans for/in the area
- wetlands protected under the UN Ramsar Convention or provincial legislation. See: [http://www.cws-scf.ec.gc.ca/publications/habitat/ramconv/where\\_e.cfm](http://www.cws-scf.ec.gc.ca/publications/habitat/ramconv/where_e.cfm)
- wetlands that may need protection
- information regarding sensitive areas (or pollution zones)
- type of manure storage facility (earthen with clay liner, earthen with synthetic liner, above ground, compost pile)
- water quality monitoring wells installed
- source of water for washing barns or watering livestock
- adequacy of supply of water available for the project
- water license or water permit required or issued
- watershed planning activities in the region

Talk with people in your community—they often better know the lay of the land and the state of the water resource than government officials. For instance elders in your community will know how scarce water may become in periods of drought, or how creeks behave in flood years.

## Land

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### *How will this factory farm affect the land around you?*

#### **Nutrient (Manure) Management Plans**

Depending on the province, an ILO proponent may be required to develop a nutrient management plan so that they may dispose of the manure onto the land in an acceptable fashion. A nutrient management plan attempts to identify suitable nearby acreage for the proponent to spread the manure so that the amount of nitrogen contained in the manure matches the amount of nitrogen that will be removed from the soil by the crop growing on the land in that year. Manure management based on nitrogen quantities alone results in the over-application of phosphorus. Quebec is the only province that has modified this nutrient balancing exercise by having operators shift towards applying manure based on a crops' ability to take up phosphorus. Manitoba is also in the process of requiring operators to eventually reduce phosphorus applications onto the land. Excessive or inappropriate manure spreading can also result in copper, zinc, salt and selenium contamination of soils.

#### **To assess what kind of impact the factory farm will have on the land, find out:**

- type of crops grown in the area
- amount of nutrients applied to the land (nitrogen and phosphorus)
- does the operator require a permit or certification for manure management
- available land acres and location for manure spreading
- tenure status of land for manure spreading (rented or owned)
- if manure spreading contracts or agreements exist, what is their duration and who is responsible or liable for the application of manure
- do manure plans require a certification from a professionally trained agrologist
- will the proponent file a caveat<sup>1</sup> on land to be used for manure spreading?
- how will manure be applied
- how will manure be transported
- what distance manure will be transported
- rate and frequency of manure application
- suitability of land for manure application (soil classification, permeability, hydrogeologic conditions in the area)
- slope of land
- are soil test results or soil samples available or supplied
- are test bore results available or required in order to construct an earthen manure storage facility (lagoon)?



*'Caveats are notices from parties who are not owners of lands that they are claiming some right or interest in the lands. Usually this claim results from some agreement entered into between the owner of the lands and the person who filed the caveat. For example many people give Manitoba Hydro the right to run power lines across their lands. Manitoba Hydro will register a caveat to let anyone searching the title know of their agreement with the owner of the lands. This is particularly useful for providing information to people looking to purchase lands.*

You may want to involve a professional engineer or agrologist to help with some of the technical aspects of the proposal. Professional assistance may also be available from your local university. Most provinces have updated Canada's Soil Classification maps of the 1950's and 60's and soil and terrain maps may be available on-line from your provincial agriculture department.

Factory farming also generates high animal mortalities which may require a formal dead animal plan. Dead animals are incinerated, composted, buried on site or stockpiled and hauled away to landfill or rendering.

## **Air**

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### ***How will this factory farm affect the air around you?***

Agriculture is exempt from any industrial air quality standards that have been set across the country. Air emissions from factory farms usually come from one of three main sources: the ventilation stacks of the barns, the manure lagoon and from the manured fields. In addition to odor, factory farms release dangerous and toxic compounds into the air, such as hydrogen sulfide, ammonia, methane and volatile organic compounds. Most provinces have established setback distances as guidelines for ILOS near residences and community buildings, however research shows that odor plumes can travel well over five kilometers, depending on the atmospheric conditions. In addition, the nitrous oxide and methane emitted by factory farms are powerful greenhouse gases that contribute to climate change.

To assess what kind of impact the factory farm will have on the air, find out:

- the direction and speed of prevailing winds in the area
- frequency and occurrences of air inversions
- if the manure storage facility will be covered? (type of cover)
- will bio-filters be installed on the stacks of the barn
- will liquid manure be injected into the soil and incorporated
- how often will barns be washed?
- will the operation monitor air emissions?
- other advanced technologies proposed (bio-gas recovery)



## Gather Baseline Information

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It is beneficial to have credible data that tells what conditions exist in your area before construction of the factory farm begins. That way, if the project goes ahead and you suffer losses you will may be able to hold the factory farm accountable.

### You may want to:

- have your land appraised
- perform water quality tests on wells, dugouts, ponds and creeks on your property or acquire water quality data of others in the vicinity. *Putting Factory Farms to the Test* is a manual designed by Environmental Defence to help community groups monitor the effects of local factory farms on nearby water sources. Download from:  
**<http://www.environmentaldefence.ca/reports/put-factory-farm-to-test.htm>**
- send a letter through a lawyer to the proponent stating your concerns and asking how they will be addressed
- determine where the environmental liability falls with each component of the factory farm operation
- ask for an environmental performance bond to be placed as a condition on the development to help offset foreseeable environmental costs
- utilize freedom of information laws to acquire some of the background information
- check previous council meeting minutes held with proponents

*For assistance with gathering baseline data you can contact the BFF offices.*





## 8 Analyse the ILO's Economics

### **Promises vs. Reality**

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#### **Factory farms promise communities:**

- New jobs
- Influx of money to a community that may be seen as dying
- Better markets for farmers' grain
- More commerce for business
- Population increase
- They will be non-polluters
- No alteration of quality of life

#### **However, in reality:**

- Jobs are often limited, low wage, and hazardous. There is generally a high turnover rate.
- Building materials and equipment are bought outside the area as many of these areas are remote and have low populations, which in turn often means that supplies needed by the proponent are not readily available in the community.
- Feed is bought wherever it is cheapest, usually outside the area
- Population declines
- Tourism suffers
- Unemployment and poverty rise
- Small communities have few stores and little shopping to absorb the wages of workers. As a result, money leaves the area.
- Property values decline
- The tax burden on the region increases due to environmental costs, infrastructure costs, social costs, and resource depletion.

**Factory farm developers target areas that:**

- have environmental laws that are non-existent and/or loosely enforced.
- are isolated (small communities)
- have virtually no economic activity except agriculture
- have large amounts of cheap water

Factory farms tend to be owned by outside investors rather than local people. Therefore any profits earned (or subsidy payments received) do not stay in the community.

Factory farms are taxed at the same rate as other farms, yet they use a much higher proportion of community services than a family farm. For example, the heavy truck traffic required to deliver feed and to transport animals causes road damage and dust problems. The factory farm uses a lot of water, may contaminate the local water sources, yet does not pay extra for the costs of additional water pipes or water treatment facilities. Factory farms require workers who may have children that attend the local school, but their school taxes are no higher than the neighbouring family farm's.

For in-depth discussion of factory farm location decisions, read "*Pollution Shopping in Rural America: The myth of economic development in isolated regions*" by Dr. William J. Weida.

[www.factoryfarm.org/docs/Pollution\\_Shopping\\_Update.pdf](http://www.factoryfarm.org/docs/Pollution_Shopping_Update.pdf) (pdf)

[www.factoryfarm.org/docs/Pollution\\_Shopping\\_Update.doc](http://www.factoryfarm.org/docs/Pollution_Shopping_Update.doc) (MSWord)



## Jobs in Factory Farms

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The promise of jobs is one of the most compelling arguments ILO proponents make, particularly in communities where many of the young people have moved away. However the few jobs offered by factory farms come with many problems. Many of these problems stem from factory farms being under less stringent labour regulations which were originally designed for family farms and their hired hands. Factory farms are industrial workplaces, but workers do not have the same level of rights and protections that other factory workers have gained.

### **Low wages**

Intensive livestock production is all about maximizing production and minimizing costs. One of the costs that is minimized is labour—thus ILO workers have low wages. Labour standards that apply to other industries, such as statutory holidays, hours of work, etc. do not necessarily apply in factory farms. Moreover, ILOs are generally not unionized (only one barn in Canada has ever had a union). The combination of low wages and poor working conditions results in a high rate of turn-over. Many companies have had to recruit new workers from abroad, as local and Canadian workers are able to find more attractive employment.

### **Occupational Health problems**

Working in a factory farm is a hazardous occupation.

**Hog barn worker disease hazards include:**

- infectious diseases
- upper airway disease
- lower airway disease (including organic dust toxic syndrome (ODTS), occupational asthma, acute or subacute bronchitis and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease)
- interstitial lung disease.

**Hog barn worker injury hazards include:**

- eye, nose and throat irritation
- traumatic injuries
- noise-induced hearing loss
- needle sticks
- hydrogen sulphide (H<sub>2</sub>S) poisonings
- carbon monoxide (CO) poisonings
- electrocutions
- thermal stress
- drowning

Yet in many jurisdictions, coverage by workers compensation is not compulsory for factory farms. So if a worker is hurt on the job or develops a chronic health condition, the cost will be carried by the public health system, the worker and his or her family. It may result in a long-term injury preventing the worker from getting another job.





## 9 Investigate the Corporation Involved

The intensive livestock production system is dominated by large, vertically integrated corporations. If there is a local committee or individual farmer promoting the ILO in your community, they are likely acting on behalf of a large corporation, or intending to set up a contract to produce for a large corporation. Find out which corporation is involved with the proposal.

Once you know which corporation is involved, look for financial records, liens, security statements and information on the company behind the proposed ILO. Find out the names of the investors and the directors of the corporation.

Investigate the past track record of any investors and the operator. Find out where this proponent's other operations are, and find out about the environmental impacts they have had. Gather evidence of problems, such as photographs and signed statements from nearby residents, and present them to the decision-makers and media for your community.

## To find information on corporations

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### **Corporation filings**

Look up the company on the “*System for Electronic Document Analysis and Retrieval*” (SEDAR) website [www.sedar.com](http://www.sedar.com). This website provides information for investors in all publicly traded corporations in Canada. Click on *Company Profiles* and choose the first letter of the company's name, then scroll down to click on the name. Then click on “*View this company's public documents*”. Some of the useful public documents are the Annual Report, the MD&A (Management's Discussion and Analysis), and any Prospectus that has been issued.

Not all companies are publicly traded. For companies that are not listed on SEDAR, find out which province the corporation is registered in and look up the company on that province's corporate registry. Most provinces allow you to do this on the internet and charge a nominal fee for the service. (See the *Provincial Resources* section for more information). You will be able to get information about the location of the head office and the type of company (sole proprietorship, limited company, etc.) from the basic listing. Order the company's Annual Return to get more details, including the names of all the directors, a listing of the investors and the number of shares each one holds.

Review the documents closely and look for any information that will help. You may want to do an internet search on each of the company directors' names to see if they are involved with other ILO enterprises, corporations or government agencies.

## **2—Section 9: Investigate the Corporation Involved**

To find out more about the company's and its directors' track record you can search for news articles that mention them. Use "quotation marks" around the full name so you don't get too many irrelevant hits. You can go to your local public library, or use its website, to access specialized news databases to find archived articles from many different sources. Ask the librarian to help you get started. You may be able to use your community college or university libraries to gain access to more sophisticated searching tools.

Make notes as you go and share your results with members of your group and with allies. You are building a picture of the company.

### ***Loans or liens against the Corporation***

Learn if there are any liens against the company or the land proposed for the ILO development. Each province has a system for searching for liens. You will need to have specific information about the debtor or the land concerned in order to do an effective search. There is a nominal fee for doing a lien search.

### ***Public loans or funding***

Find out about any government loans or other public funding to the company, particularly any funds or loans specific to the ILO proposal in your community. There are federal funding programs common to all, or several, provinces. There are provincial programs in each province. And, some municipalities may give grants or loans to the ILO proponent as an incentive to locate there. "Public-private partnerships" for infrastructure development are another form of public subsidy to ILOs in situations where the risk (pollution and cost over-runs) is born by the public and the benefit (profit) is captured by the company. There are many forms of public subsidy to the industrial livestock sector.

### ***Federal programs, funds and loans***

#### **ACAAF**

The Advancing Canadian Agriculture and Agri-Food program is a five-year, \$240 million program aimed at positioning Canada's agriculture and agri-food sector at the leading edge to seize new opportunities. ACAAf was launched in April 2004 as a successor to the Canadian Adaptation and Rural Development (CARD) Fund.

[www.agr.gc.ca/acaaf/index\\_e.html](http://www.agr.gc.ca/acaaf/index_e.html)

For the administrators of ACAAf grants in your province, see:

[www.agr.gc.ca/acaaf/information/acaafcouncils\\_e.html](http://www.agr.gc.ca/acaaf/information/acaafcouncils_e.html)



**The Canadian Adaptation and Rural Development (CARD) Fund (Prior to 2004)**

Initially started in 1995, the CARD program was the Government of Canada's initiative to foster the increased long-term growth, employment and competitiveness of Canada's agricultural and agri-food industry and agricultural rural areas. CARD supported change by providing measures to assist the sector in adapting to structural changes and to capture market opportunities. See:

[www.agr.gc.ca/acaaf/card/cardinfo\\_e.html](http://www.agr.gc.ca/acaaf/card/cardinfo_e.html)

**Federal Investment Tax Credit**

Deducted from federal tax payable, this credit is 10 percent of net investment in equipment and buildings in manufacturing, processing, mining, oil and gas, logging, farming, and fishing. Investment Tax Credits which exceed federal tax payable can be carried back to reduce federal tax in the three previous years or carried forward up to ten years. This credit applies only in the Atlantic Provinces and Quebec's Gaspé region.

[www.gnb.ca/0398/investment/incentives/index-e.asp](http://www.gnb.ca/0398/investment/incentives/index-e.asp)

**Western Economic Diversification Fund**

Provides grants to businesses and organizations promoting economic development in Western Canada.

[www.wd.gc.ca/default\\_e.asp](http://www.wd.gc.ca/default_e.asp)



## How to find out about provincial programs, funds and loans

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**Each province has programs to encourage economic development in agriculture. Use the internet to search for:**

- Livestock-related sales tax rebate programs
- infrastructure cost-sharing programs that provide public money for things like roads, water treatment facilities, that will primarily be used by the ILO
- labour-sponsored venture capital funds that primarily invest in ILOs, which have high levels of tax exemptions
- direct investment into ILOs
- Immigration assistance programs that are primarily geared to providing labour to ILOs

**Use the internet and search for “livestock” plus any of the following terms:**

- tax credit
- investment incentive
- tax rebate
- investment program
- development
- value-added incentive
- workforce expansion
- work placement
- job creation

**Search archived government press releases for announcements about large one-time grants, loans and investments.**

## How to find out about local grants and loans

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**Review past Minutes of your local rural and urban councils and look for:**

- any motions authorizing loans or grants to the ILO proponent, to the local committee acting on behalf of the proponent, or to the individual farmer seeking a contract with the ILO corporation.
- authorization of infrastructure development proposals or feasibility studies that would provide things like a water supply, a road, water treatment facilities, etc. required by an ILO.
- tax exemptions, tax rebates, or tax reductions for the ILO proponent.





## **10** *Understand the Legal Framework*

Find out what laws, regulations, permits and other legal requirements apply to the proposal, the proponent and the industry. Local and provincial authorities may not be diligent in ensuring that the ILO project is complying with all the measures it should. If you are aware of the legal framework you will be able to hold the authorities and the proponent accountable. Look for:

### **Local regulations**

- Local or township resolutions
- Local regulations and restrictions
- Municipal planning commission statements
- Zoning and land use bylaws
- Determine if the ILO is a discretionary use or permitted use in your area
- Minimum distance set-backs
- Community economic development plans
- Health regulations

### **Construction plans and permit applications**

- Review the proponent's construction plans and permit applications
- Do a record search
- Land surveys of proposed facility by government or non-government conservation agencies or geological survey of Canada
- Applications or approvals for building permits
- Any general permits or operating permits (including provincial or municipal waste-water disposal permits)

### **Water permits**

- Review any water permits issued or applied for
- Proposed water usage from your private or municipal water supply

### **Provincial legislation, regulations and policy**

- Environmental protection legislation
- Watershed management or source water protection measures
- Municipal planning and development acts
- Public health and safety measures
- Right to farm legislation
- other agriculture legislation

### **Federal legislation and regulations**

- Fisheries Act
- Canadian Environmental Protection Act
- Canadian Environmental Assessment Act
- National Pollutant Release Inventory
- Canadian Food Inspection Agency Regulations

*Note that the Beyond Factory Farming Coalition is in the process of collecting detailed information about the legal framework of ILOs in Canada, which will be published as a companion to this guide. Contact the BFF office for more information.*





## **11 Use the Legal System**

There are a variety of ways to use the law and the courts and the legal system in general. The following section is not intended to be legal advice, but merely some considerations and information you might find useful. For legal advice contact a bona fide lawyer.

### **Pros and Cons of Litigation**

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The decision to take legal action needs to be very carefully thought out and taken on only as part of a larger strategy. Legal battles are costly and require a high degree of commitment over a significant period of time. Sadly, laws and regulations in Canada regarding intensive livestock operations are relatively weak, so you must assess the consequences of losing, as well as the benefits of winning your case. Do not decide to take legal action based on the feeling or belief that what the ILO is doing is wrong, you are right, and therefore you should win. Have a full and frank discussion with your legal counsel to assess whether your case is winnable. If your group decides that going to court does make sense, be sure you are well-informed and able to commit the necessary time, money and energy required for the duration of the court battle.

#### **Pros**

- Can create precedent that will prevent future ILOs from getting away with the offence
- Can stop or delay development while legal issues remain unresolved
- Can show the ILO corporation you are serious
- Can expose the ILO to increased public scrutiny as your case gains access to evidence

#### **Cons**

- Can create a damaging precedent if you lose, making it harder for other communities to defend themselves against the offence in question
- Can be very costly and use up resources (financial and personal) that could have been used in other ways
- Can heighten conflict, making it more difficult to repair relationships in the community later on

You may have to pay court costs to the other side if you lose. Costs are a reimbursement for the expense of bringing or defending an action in Court. The Court may award costs as part of the settlement of a legal action. Normally, the losing party must pay costs to the winning party.

## **Hiring a Lawyer**

A major consideration in deciding whether to pursue a legal action is finding the right lawyer and paying for his/her services. You will have to pay the lawyer's fees (charges for work done by the lawyer) as well as disbursements (things the lawyer paid for on your behalf in order to pursue the case). The lawyer may charge an hourly rate (expect to pay from \$200 to \$400/hour), a flat fee, or he/she may work on contingency (a percentage of the settlement, payable only if you win).

To find a lawyer contact your province's Private Bar, and any public interest organizations or environmental law groups that operate in your province (See the *Provincial Resources* section for your province for a list of public interest law groups). Some private firms will do "*pro bono*" work (that is, free of charge to you) as a form of public service.

When working with a lawyer it is important to be very explicit and focused in your communications. The group needs to have a clear decision-making process in order to instruct the lawyer effectively. A mutually respectful relationship that recognizes the expertise and interests of the lawyer and the client will be a major asset in any legal action.

## **Nuisance suits and "Right to Farm" legislation**

Each province in Canada has passed some kind of "Right to Farm" legislation since 1996. These laws are apparently meant to protect farms and farmers from nuisance suits due to incompatibility with newer non-farm activities such as acreages and urban recreational uses. However, they are used to shield ILOs from liability for nuisance as well.

ILOs are protected from nuisance suits if they use "normally accepted agricultural practices". In some provinces, having their activities so defined is all the ILO needs in order to avoid liability for nuisance. In Manitoba and Ontario, an ILO operator that does not meet the requirements of other relevant laws, such as municipal bylaws and environmental statutes, could be found to be operating outside of accepted practices, and thus open to liability for nuisance.

In every province, it is up to the neighbour making the complaint to prove that the ILO is not following normally accepted agricultural practices. The procedure for determining whether an ILO meets the criteria of the right to farm legislation varies from province to province. Some provide for a mediation process, others have a quasi-judicial administrative process.

## **Strict liability**

Rylands v. Fletcher is the oft-cited precedent under Common Law for certain types of liability cases. In order for it to be relevant a physical invasion of land (such as a spill) resulting from the defendant's actions (or failure to act) is required, it must have caused damage, and the plaintiff must own (or have an ownership interest in) the property in question. Rylands v. Fletcher will not apply if the court deems the use of the land in question is overly sensitive.



## ***Conflict of Interest***

Public officials are required to disclose any conflict of interest they might have, and to remove themselves from debate and voting on any matters where conflict exists. Conflict of interest is usually defined as the individual or a member of his/her immediate family having a personal pecuniary (money) interest in the outcome of a decision they are involved in making. If you suspect that an elected representative, government appointee or civil servant who is involved in decision-making on an ILO proposal may be in conflict of interest, check the policy, rules or regulations pertaining to that person's position or office. If conflict of interest is found to exist, the decisions in question may be over-turned by the courts.

## ***Fisheries Act***

Under the Fisheries Act and the Criminal Code of Canada, a private party can bring criminal charges against another individual or company if they have reasonable and probable grounds to believe that the person or company is harming and destroying fish habitat, or is depositing deleterious substances in waters frequented by fish.

## ***SLAPP Suits***

A "Strategic Lawsuit Against Public Participation", or SLAPP suit, is a lawsuit filed against an individual who is fighting a corporation or speaking out against a business. They are an attempt by a company to silence people who are critical of that company's operations or who are trying to hold the corporation accountable for some wrongdoing. The Sierra Legal Defense Fund identifies the following characteristics of a SLAPP suit:

- The plaintiff is usually a mid to large-sized company.
- The suit claims enormous damages and generally seeks an injunction.
- The defendant has been speaking out with some success in an attempt to influence government policy or public perception, and the issue is one of public interest or concern.

SLAPP suits can be very effective—many individuals fear the threat of a lawsuit and will not speak up against a company, even if the company is violating the law. One of the most famous SLAPP suits in recent times was the Cattlemen's Association lawsuit against Oprah Winfrey over her statements about beef. (Ms. Winfrey won.) Your best protection against SLAPP suits is to be careful to always get the facts before you issue a statement. In addition, stay away from personal attacks and media sound bites that include statements you can't support. Finally, realize that SLAPP suits are meant to keep you quiet—those who file such a suit don't do it for the purpose of winning in court, they do it with the hope that the strain and expense of defending against it will deter you from speaking. If you have to contend with a SLAPP suit, there is help available. For extensive information on what to do, read the *Survival Guide for SLAPP Victims* at: [www.casp.net/survival.html](http://www.casp.net/survival.html)



## Legal Tools for Citizens' Groups

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The following section outlines various legal tools that are available to you.

(Note: The following information is summarized from the Sierra Legal Defence Fund's "Legal Toolkit" Options, Strategies and Tactics for Environmental Groups).

### **Civil Proceedings**

A civil proceeding is a suit brought by a plaintiff against a defendant in any number of areas including nuisance, negligence and trespass. It is usually based upon an "action" (statement of claim) or an "application" (notice of application). The plaintiff (you) must prove all elements of the claim, including personal loss or injury, interference with property rights or some other special damage. Depending on the claim, it can proceed on oral evidence or affidavit (sworn statement) evidence. Watch out for limitation periods, which are like expiry dates for your lawsuit.

### **Applications for Judicial Review**

An application for judicial review is a court challenge by an applicant against a respondent to actions or decisions taken by government officials. This is most always done by affidavit. There are two broad grounds of judicial review: illegality of decision (outside of jurisdiction, abuse of discretion) and unfairness of procedure (failure to follow steps, notice, etc...)

The only evidence a court will consider must be part of the "record" and includes evidence considered by the decision maker before the decision was made. This means that you have to get the evidence in before the decision is made so that it can legitimately be before the court.

### **Class Actions**

Quebec, BC, Ontario, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, and Newfoundland and Labrador currently have class action legislation. A class action is a civil proceeding brought by a group or class of plaintiffs against one or more defendants. Check your province's legislation for details (see the *Provincial Resources* section). Generally all class members are automatically part of a class action unless they choose to opt out, and no costs are to be awarded in a class action unless there has been misconduct by one of the parties or it would be unjust to deprive the successful party of costs.

### **Interventions**

A group or individual who feels they may provide some meaningful contribution to a case may become an intervenor in a court case brought by someone else, with the court's permission. The applicant must have an interest in the outcome of the proceedings, and must be in a position to make a useful contribution or offer a different perspective from that of the parties.



## ***Injunctions***

An injunction is an order of the court prohibiting a party from doing something or forcing them to undo something. An injunction is *not* available against the Crown, but an interim or interlocutory injunction is available against Crown agents, including a minister. An injunction is also available where the Crown or agent is acting unconstitutionally. Beware that an applicant for an interlocutory injunction may be required to provide an undertaking (i.e. agree to pay the costs of the injunction to the defendant if you lose).

## ***Declarations***

A declaration is a statement by the court clarifying legal status or rights. Although it is not possible to get an injunction against the Crown, it is possible to get declaratory relief.

## ***Evidence***

Rules of evidence govern what evidence is admissible, and how facts are proved. Rules vary depending on the type of legal action. When gathering and presenting evidence you have to be clear on what facts you need to prove and how you will you prove those facts.

## ***Standing***

Standing is the legal right to initiate a lawsuit. There is a 3-step test to determine who can get Public Interest standing:

1. Is there a serious issue to be tried?
2. Is the person applying for standing directly affected by the issues or does s/he have a genuine interest in them?
3. Is there any other reasonable way for the issue to get to court?

## ***Mediation***

Mediation is a private and consensual decision-making process in which an impartial person (the mediator) assists people in conflict to resolve their problems. Depending on the province, mediation may or may not be mandatory.

## ***Prosecutions: Crown and Private Prosecutions***

When you become aware that an offence has been committed you may either tell the Crown and let them decide whether to prosecute, or, prosecute the offender(s) yourself. A private prosecution is a legal action brought in criminal court by an individual (as opposed to a government official).

To conduct a private prosecution you must observe an offence, speak to other witnesses and gather evidence (who, what, when, where), and swear an information before a Justice of the Peace. You must believe on reasonable grounds that the accused has committed the offence.

Every individual in Canada has the right to swear an information to commence a prosecution. The Attorney General may step in and stay (stop) your prosecution. For more information about private prosecutions, see *Enforcing Environmental Law: A Guide to Private Prosecution* by James S. Mallet, (Edmonton: Environmental Law Centre, 2004).

Advantages of private prosecutions are that there is no need for standing, no waiting for government action and you could possibly be entitled to portion of monetary penalty. However the Attorney General may intervene to withdraw or stay charges and expert evidence may be difficult to obtain.

When the Attorney General prosecutes, his/her office has access to expert investigators, proof of intent is not required in regard to public welfare offences and there is usually public and media interest in these cases. However public prosecutions require proof beyond a reasonable doubt of the offence, evidence of lack of due diligence, and there is no right to discover the other side's case.

## **“Soft Law”**

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“Soft Law” can be used with, or as an alternative to, going to court. Here are some examples:

### ***Freedom of Information***

Freedom of Information legislation is a tool for gaining access to government documents that applies at all three levels of government. See the *Provincial Resources* section for a website link to your province's access to information process. Federally, see the Access to Information Act and the Department of Justice webpage on accessing information at:

**[canada.justice.gc.ca/en/ps/atip/index.html](http://canada.justice.gc.ca/en/ps/atip/index.html)**

To apply, write a letter or fill out the appropriate form and submit it to the government organization that has the information you seek. Check to see if an application fee is required. Avoid being too broad or vague. Direct the government to the specific type of documents you seek. The FOI Coordinator has 30 days to respond to you. If you don't hear back within 30 days, your request is deemed to be refused. The FOI Coordinator can apply for an extension if she provides written notice and reasons for the extension. If the FOI Coordinator can respond to the request, she will send a Fee Estimate and deposit requirements (50% of the Fee). Fees may be waived in certain circumstances, such as financial hardship or if the information will benefit public health and safety. If you apply for the fee waiver you need evidence to support your claims.

If the Coordinator refuses your request, s/he must provide written reasons. Certain documents such as Cabinet records, documents dealing with law enforcement or national security, and documents covered by solicitor-client privilege are exempt from FOI legislation and will not be released.

You may wish to appeal the decision. Provinces each have their own rules regarding appeals of the FOI office's decision. Generally, there is a time limit for requesting a review of the decision. You will be entitled to make representations to the responsible official. The official will report to the head of the relevant government body, who will decide upon further action, if any. If you are not satisfied with the investigation and review decision, you have a certain number of days to decide whether to appeal to the Court of Queen's Bench.

## **Canadian Environmental Assessment Act (CEAA)**

CEAA applies when a physical work or physical activity is proposed and the federal government is implicated somehow. For example, the proponent may be a federal body or the project may require a federal permit, be federally funded or on federal land. CEAA requires that the federal government conduct the assessment. There are three types of assessments: Screenings (98.5% of EAs), Comprehensive studies (1.4%), and Panel reviews (0.1%). Public participation in comprehensive studies and panel reviews is mandatory while public participation in screenings is discretionary. Keep up to date by checking the Canadian Environmental Assessment Registry at: [www.ceaa.gc.ca/050/index\\_e.cfm](http://www.ceaa.gc.ca/050/index_e.cfm)

## **Law Reform**

Law reform is the attempt to convince governments to change the law. You can get involved in law reform by providing input into the legislative process (for example, submit a written brief or give oral testimony to a legislative committee); by responding to public participation processes; by proposing a new law under the federal *Auditor General Act*.

## **Petitions**

Prepare a petition under the federal *Auditor General Act* (Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development) and ask for an investigation by a particular ministry. Write:

Office of the Auditor General of Canada  
Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development  
Attention: Petitions  
240 Sparks Street  
Ottawa, Ontario  
K1A 0G6 Canada

613-995-3708 or 1-888-761-5953 (toll free)

Fax: 613-941-8286

[http://www.oag-bvg.gc.ca/domino/cesd\\_cedd.nsf/html/menu7\\_e.html](http://www.oag-bvg.gc.ca/domino/cesd_cedd.nsf/html/menu7_e.html)

## **Investigation**

Ask for a formal investigation by the federal Minister of Environment under section 17 of the *Canadian Environmental Protection Act*.

(Note that the investigation must be limited to CEPA offences.)



## ***International Law***

The Commission for Environmental Cooperation was established by Canada, Mexico and the US under the *North American Agreement on Environmental Cooperation* (a side agreement to NAFTA). The CEC's mandate is to foster cooperation on environment issues and to oversee enforcement of environmental laws by NAFTA parties.

The Secretariat is an independent body under the CEC. NAAEC Article 14 allows citizens to make written submissions to the CEC regarding the lack of enforcement of a domestic environmental law.

