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Section C

What the “Industrial Model” of Animal Agriculture Means for Rural Communities

Factors Influencing CAFO Site Selection

- Capital is mobile
- “Geographic” economies of scale
 - Clustering CAFOs reduces costs such as transportation
- Duration of operation short
 - Select area that
 - ▶ Minimizes investment
 - ▶ Minimizes exposure
 - ▶ Minimizes community involvement

Ideal Conditions for CAFO Sites

- Isolation
- Cheap land
- Large expanses of vacant land
 - Within reach of a pipeline to transport waste

Ideal Conditions for CAFO Sites

- Arid environment
- Low water cost
- Established transportation infrastructure
- Favorable regulatory environment

Danger for Communities

- “Pollution haven” attracts other industries that want to pollute
 - Prisons
 - Landfills
 - Gambling
- Costs to residents of the region
- Attractive rural areas are more economically successful than unattractive rural communities
- If area is polluted, it is more difficult to attract non-polluting activities

Why Would Communities Allow CAFOs?

- Industry preys on fears and economic desperation
- Perception in community that there are no alternatives
- Promises of economic benefits to community
- No industry accountability

Impacts of IAP on Rural Communities

- Property values decrease
- Tax base suffers while increasing need for services
- Truck traffic has strong impact on roads

Impacts of IAP on Rural Communities

- Property values decrease
- Tax base suffers while increasing need for services
- Truck traffic has strong impact on roads
- Goldschmidt (USDA, 1946)
 - Large agricultural operations = decreased economic benefit
 - Money needs to stay in the community

Hog Contract Operators

- Industry approaches local landowners
- Local person takes out loans to build barns
- At best, profit of \$35,000 per year, with \$1 million debt, \$70,000 interest in first year
- Loan secured by land
- Loan outlasts contracts to produce food animals
- Farm land lost to lender
- Reps from state agencies, faculty of land grants, etc., help convince people to enter contracts

What Do We Know?

- IAP
 - Economics of operations mandate a behavior that is bad for local region, leads to pollution, and is likely disaster for the contract operator
- Why?
 - Perception that it is the only alternative

The Next Course?

- Current course for rural communities is dire but avoidable
- Instead, communities need to
 - Support local conventional farming
 - Band together to reestablish markets for conventional farmers
 - Promise themselves not to opt for “quick fixes”

Public Health Responsibilities

- Important to pay attention to incentive structure
 - Secure long-term environment for the community, not an unsustainable one that only benefits a few
- Economics and public health concerns