

I am opposed to mega-dairies for the following reasons:

Mega-dairies threaten to drain Oregon's water resources. A mega-dairy with 30,000 cows uses more water than the City of Bend. Our rivers, streams, and aquifers, especially in Eastern Oregon, cannot support that kind of water extraction.

There has been decades-long drinking water contamination in the Lower Umatilla Basin Groundwater Management Area, driven in significant part by mega-dairies and irrigated agriculture, demonstrating that existing state laws and regulations have failed to prevent this pollution.

Mega-dairies are a significant contributor to the climate crisis, discharging methane and other greenhouse gasses. Mega-dairies cannot be part of Oregon's future if we want to do our part to prevent the worst effects of climate change. Even facilities that use methane digesters do not avoid these climate impacts. Digesters do nothing to reduce other air emissions, can't capture the greenhouse gas emissions from cows themselves, and at best can only capture the additional methane created by the lagoon-and-spray system mega-dairies use. Instead, digesters create a market for factory farm gas, which incentivizes larger herds and only further entrenches mega-dairies.

Mega-dairies produce mega-pollution. They foul our air with dangerous pollutants that harm health, and pollute our special places like the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area. Mega-dairies are major contributors of ammonia and haze in the Columbia River Gorge.

Oregon's largest mega-dairies are often situated in rural Latinx and Hispanic communities of color. It's long been shown nationwide that low income rural communities of color suffer disproportionate impacts from factory farms and mega-dairies in Oregon are no exception. No communities should suffer health harms for private profit.

For these reasons I request a mega-dairy moratorium which would halt the development of new mega-dairies, and prevent the expansion of existing ones. That means that a mega-dairy moratorium will at least ensure that this destructive method of dairy production doesn't spread further within our state and will give us an opportunity to address the existing harms from mega-dairies. Given the gaps in our laws, we need to do more to protect all Oregonians before it is too late.

Thank you for your attention to this important issue.