

I support a moratorium on any additional Mega-dairies because there are a number of problems associated with these massive enterprises. Of greatest interest to me is the fact mega-dairies cause is an enormous, concentrated demand on water resources. The demand for all this water comes from a multitude of needs such as 1) water for crops to feed the cows, 2) to absorb nitrates from the animal waste, 3) drinking water for the cows, and 4) water for washing barns, running machinery, and otherwise operating the dairy. It adds up to the water demands of a medium-sized city. The proposed Easterday dairy would use about 20 million gallons of water per day (as an annual average) – more water than the City of Bend. The water to irrigate crops would come from the Columbia River, which needs all the water it has left for struggling salmon and steelhead. The rest of the water will probably come from groundwater aquifers, even though groundwater in the area is rapidly declining and several subareas have been designated as “Critical Groundwater Areas.” To make things worse, mega-dairies can exploit a loophole in the law that allows unlimited “stockwatering” without a permit – an exemption established in a time of much smaller farms. Stockwatering for 30,000 cows is an entirely different proposal.