

Submitter: Margaret Spahn

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Natural Resources

Measure: SB85

I am writing in support of Senate Bill 85-1 placing a temporary moratorium on very large, Tier II Confined Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs) in the state of Oregon. Industrial Farming has changed. Oregon CAFO regulations need to change along with industrial farming. The State's regulations are no longer adequate to protect Oregon's resources and people, and regulatory maintenance is needed.

I am especially concerned with the increased chicken industry interest in siting massive broiler chicken grow-out CAFOs in Oregon, particularly targeting rural Linn and Marion Counties. This is an opening foray, and it will not stop at rural Linn and Marion Counties. We can and should learn from the experiences of other states.

NOW is the time to place a temporary pause on the permitting of Tier II CAFOs in the State. A CAFO Permit lasts for 10 years! It's entirely appropriate to take a pause on new or expanded Tier II CAFOs, examine the issues, gather facts, and modify Oregon regulations to address shortcomings and protect the natural resources and people of Oregon.

Some of the ways that industrial broiler chicken CAFOs have changed include:

o Size

- To help visualize the massive size of these factory farms, imagine that a single flock of chickens from a proposed factory farm in Scio were to occupy the Oregon State Capitol Building at the planned density of 0.75 square feet per chicken.

The rotunda, the chambers, the Senate and House office wings, and the meeting rooms would all be filled with chickens in every nook and cranny – in every 9 inch by 9 inch square. Four stories high. And we would still have to leave 66,000 chickens outside. That's 566,000 chickens in one flock (not the largest of the recently proposed industrial farms). Rinse and repeat 6 times a year – for over 3 million birds.

- Vertical Integration in the Chicken Industry

- o These Tier II Chicken CAFOs are Factory Farms – contracted by to grow chickens for a corporation that controls all the steps in production – stock selection feed, transportation, grow-out procedures, processing and marketing.

- o The chickens, feed, and pharmaceuticals are owned entirely by a contracting corporation. The corporation IS the Animal and Feed – the "A" and the "F" portion of the CAFO acronym. In addition, through their contracts, the corporations specify the Confinement parameters and Operating procedures.

- o Large out of state corporations have major ownership interest and intimate operational involvement in their contracted grow-out facilities. And yet the corporation is not identified as a responsible party on the CAFO permit and is free of potential risk or liability.

- o The contractor owns the chicken manure and the dead chickens. The main

profits are taken by a large out-of-state corporation. The main risks and liabilities are left to the contract farmer and the community.

- The Concentrated Siting of Factory Farms
 - o Chicken Processors have shown a pattern of targeting geographic areas for concentrations of Factory farms.
 - o Targeted areas bear the brunt of the environmental and health effects of these operations. Property values drop for homes near individual factory farms, and in communities where CAFOS are concentrated. Decreased property values are catastrophic to individual citizens, and reduce the local tax base. Counties in the Midwest have reduced tax valuations of large swaths of properties near CAFOs by 10 to 40 percent.³

- The Concentration of Animals within the CAFO
 - o A proposed Chicken CAFO in Scio, raising over 3 million chickens per year is sited on only 60 acres of land. At a safe application rate, it would take thousands of acres to accommodate the waste generated.
 - o Chicken manure contains bacteria, pathogens, arsenic and heavy metals. The potential for water pollution from dry poultry manure is greatest when it is spread on crop land¹, yet we do not track where the chicken manure is spread.

I urge you to pass Senate Bill 85