

DAIRY FACTORY FARM FACT SHEET

FACT: Van Ham Dairy, owned by Jan and Anja Van Ham at 7089 Rd. 22, Continental, has applied to the Ohio Department of Agriculture for permits to expand from a capacity of 690 dairy cows to a capacity of 2,250 dairy cows.

FACT: According to the United States EPA, one mature dairy cow produces approximately 120 pounds of wet manure each day, or 43,800 pounds a year. That equals approximately 98,550,000 pounds of wet manure each year for 2,250 cows.

FACT: According to the United States EPA, one mature dairy cow produces 20 to 40 times the waste a human produces. Using an average of 30, the waste from 2,250 dairy cows equals the untreated waste of 67,500 people. There are 34,200 people in Putnam County, according to figures from the 2000 census. Therefore, every day the waste produced by 2,250 cows could nearly double the waste produced by the entire population of Putnam County. This untreated manure would lie in an open-air waste pit in a direction from Continental that is usually upwind of the village.

FACT: Factory dairy farmers, including Van Ham Dairy, store manure in open-air waste pits, called lagoons, then spread the manure on fields, often via open-air spraying. The capacity of the lagoons, according to Van Ham Dairy, must increase from 5 million gallons to 20 million gallons in order to have adequate storage for 2,250 dairy cows.

FACT: More than 70% of the earthen manure lagoons investigated in a 1999 Iowa State University study were leaking faster than Iowa standards allow, and pollution of groundwater is "unavoidable", according to a report commissioned by the Iowa state legislature. The report said, basically, that earthen manure lagoons leak, and when they are dug to depths of 15 to 20 feet, they probably leak into the groundwater.

FACT: Toxic air emissions from anaerobic livestock manure lagoons may include hydrogen sulfide, methane gas, ammonia, and endotoxins. The most frequently reported health complaints of people living near a livestock CAFO include eye, nose, and throat irritation, headache, nausea, diarrhea, hoarseness, sore throat, cough, chest tightness, nasal congestion, palpitations, shortness of breath, stress, and alterations in mood, according to university studies.

FACT: At least 24 people in the Midwest have died from inhaling hydrogen sulfide and methane gas from manure since the 1970's, including a fifth-generation Michigan dairy farmer and four members of his family, who collapsed one by one in 1989 after breathing methane gas from a manure pit.

FACT: A dairy operation of 2,250 cows could use over 180,000 gallons of water a day. It is estimated that each mature dairy cow requires about 80 gallons of water per day for drinking and cleanup. The American Water Works Association estimates that the water usage per person per day in an average household is 60 gallons. A 2,250-cow factory dairy could be using the equivalent water usage of approximately 3000 people, or at an average of 4 people per household, about 750 households. The town of Continental has 1,188 residents, which should have an average daily water consumption of approximately 71,000 gallons for residential, or home, purposes. A 2,250-cow factory dairy could be consuming over twice the amount of water needed by the entire village of Continental for residential purposes, competing for this water out of the same aquifer. Some area wells have already gone dry.

FACT: Of all the water on earth, only three percent is fresh water, and of that, only one percent is available for human consumption.

FACT: Water contamination from CAFOS, from nitrogen, phosphorus, pathogens, microbes, and antibiotics, may increase with the concentration of livestock and liquid manure storage and spreading. Livestock farming was suspected in 306 pollution investigations in Ohio since 1993, up 26 percent from the previous decade.

FACT: Sixty-five miles north of Continental, in the Hudson, Michigan area (population 2500), there are ten dairy confined animal feeding operations with over 10,000 dairy cows. There have been 27 confirmed violations/discharges of liquid manure to public waters from all ten of the industrial sized dairies since February of 2000. The Michigan Department of Environmental Quality recently tested the water after a massive runoff of liquid manure from frozen ground and found an E-coli count at its highest level yet: 1,340,000 colonies of E-coli per/100 ml. The acceptable level is 1000 colonies/100 ml. Visit this website, www.nocafos.org and you will see brown, green, black, and even white (dumped milk) surface-water in the Hudson, Michigan, area that have resulted from CAFO discharges.

FACT: Van Ham Dairy has been cited by the Ohio EPA for discharging manure to the surface-waters of the State of Ohio on May 23, 2002, and on March 16, 2003. In addition, Van Ham Dairy has been cited by the Ohio EPA for several violations of its storm-water permit.

FACT: The following serious, sometimes fatal, diseases can be transmitted to people through manure-tainted water: E-Coli O157:H7, campylobacter, and cryptosporidium.

FACT: The future of your community is in peril. Your involvement now could make the difference!

Sources: United States EPA, Ohio EPA, Iowa University, Iowa State University, American Water Works Association, North Carolina State University, Dayton Daily News series on livestock CAFO's, Duke University