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Mega-Dairy Moratorium Bill Garners Broad Public Support At Committee Hearing

Stand Up to Factory Farms joins dozens of community members to testify

Salem, OR - At a virtual hearing held by the Senate Committee on Energy and Environment just before the deadline to do so, dozens of Oregonians submitted testimony supporting the bill that would have enacted a moratorium on mega-dairies. Today's meeting represents the last time the legislation will be discussed during the 2021 session, as Committee Chair Senator Lee Beyer declined to schedule the bill for the work session necessary to move it forward. While those testifying in opposition to the bill spoke freely, those testifying in support found their time curtailed by Sen. Beyer at the hearing. Those denied full time to speak included members of communities most affected by mega-dairy pollution.

"The mega-dairy moratorium bill has enormous grassroots support," said **Emma Newton, Oregon Organizer with Food & Water Watch and the Stand Up to Factory Farms Coalition**. "Oregonians don't want these mega-polluters jeopardizing our frontline communities or natural resources. But our legislators tasked with creating policy that helps Oregonians are beholden to the mega-dairy lobby. The truth is the industrial dairy lobby doesn't represent Oregonians. It represents the profit of a select few. Oregonians will continue to work for common sense protections against these corporate polluters."

Over the past nine years, industrial dairy processor Tillamook donated \$210,999 to Oregon state legislators with [one third](#) going to Democratic senators and the rest to Republicans. Threemile Canyon Farms — a mega-dairy whose [ammonia emissions are among the highest of any industrial source nationwide](#) — has given \$278,500 to Oregon legislators over the past 14 years. Among the mega-dairies championed by the industrial dairy lobby have been the failed Lost Valley Farm, and Easterday Dairy LLC, whose founder, Cody Easterday, pleaded guilty to a multimillion dollar fraud charge on Wednesday.

For the past year, hundreds of Oregonians have worked in tandem with the Stand Up to Factory Farms coalition to advocate for a time-out on mega-dairies that would allow agencies to study and address the facilities' impact on the environment and frontline communities.

"Agriculture is the backbone of the economy in this area," said **Obdulia Munoz, board member with Oregon Rural Action**. "We need jobs. But not at the cost of harm to our water, air, and our health. It is time that the residents of this area receive the same consideration and protection that other Oregonians receive. If this situation were occurring in more populated areas of Oregon it would have been corrected."

Factory farms pollute rivers, streams, and groundwater with nitrate through loosely regulated waste disposal practices and produce large quantities of the potent greenhouse gas methane.

“A mega-dairy moratorium will allow for Oregon policymakers to take stock of the economic and environmental costs of mega-dairies, and plan for Oregon’s future accordingly,” said **Amy Wong, Policy Director for Friends of Family Farmers**. “There are too many questions left unanswered by the mega-dairy industry. We need common sense protections for our communities, environment and animals.”

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[Stand Up to Factory Farms](#) is a coalition of local, state and national organizations concerned about the harmful impacts of mega-dairies on Oregon’s family farms, communities, the environment and animal welfare. We seek legislation or an executive order establishing a moratorium on new mega-dairies and the expansion of existing mega-dairies until policies are in place that meaningfully protect our air, water, and climate and ensure the humane treatment of animals and the economic viability of family farmers.