



**Western
Environmental
Law Center**

News Release

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CITIZENS BRING SUIT TO CLEAN UP AIR POLLUTION FROM INDUSTRIAL DAIRIES IN LOWER YAKIMA VALLEY

Seeking to hold industrial dairies accountable for their release of hazardous air pollutants, citizens filed a lawsuit today against one of the biggest dairies in the state of Washington. On behalf of the Community Association for Restoration of the Environment (CARE), the Western Environmental Law Center filed suit today in federal district court seeking to require DeRuyter Brothers Dairy to obtain permits under the Clean Air Act and limit its methanol pollution.

CARE president Helen Reddout said about their lawsuit, “It’s time that industrial dairies like DeRuyter Brothers take responsibility for the pollution and harm they are causing to the people here in the lower Yakima Valley. The state and federal agencies charged with protecting public health have been asleep at the wheel for decades. We are sending them all a wake up call.”

The lawsuit seeks to require DeRuyter Brothers Dairy, a facility with over 6,300 cows on fewer than 100 acres located in Outlook, Washington, to limit its emissions of methanol which presently exceed 20,000 pounds per year. Methanol is a hazardous air pollutant. Human health risks from exposure include premature births, an increase in the number of required caesarian-section births, and, in prenatally exposed babies, instances of a severe wasting syndrome, concentration-related delay in sensorimotor development and lower performance on infant intelligence tests.

Western Environmental Law Center attorney Charlie Tebbutt added, “The dairies and the agencies responsible for regulating them have ethical and legal obligations to limit the massive pollution they are causing and harm they are doing to the citizens of the Yakima Valley. Until we have permits limiting pollution emissions, the dairies will continue to profit by putting the cost of their pollution into the people’s lungs. It’s time for that to stop.”

CARE and the Western Environmental Law Center are members of the Dairy Education Alliance, a national coalition which includes farmers and grass-roots activists dedicated to tackling the health, environmental, social and economic problems associated with large dairy operations.

The Community Association for Restoration of the Environment (“CARE”), a member-based Washington organization, has a history of successfully cleaning up CAFOs in Washington through citizen enforcement of our nation’s environmental laws.

The Western Environmental Law Center, who has successfully represented CARE for over a decade, is a nonprofit public interest law firm that works to protect and restore western wildlands and advocates for a healthy environment on behalf of communities throughout the West.