



Friends of York County Family Farms

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## New Health Ordinance Passes to Protect Codorus Township from CAFO Health and Environment Threats

*3-0 vote by Board of Supervisors a victory in fight to reduce community risks associated with industrial animal operation expansion plans by Hillandale Farms*

**CODORUS TOWNSHIP, PA—AUGUST 7, 2015**—Last night, the Board of Supervisors of Codorus Township in York County approved a landmark health ordinance creating new and necessary protections against damage to local public health, air quality and drinking water safety by industrial-sized confined animal feeding operations (CAFOs). Championed by the community group [Friends of York County Family Farms](#) with the support of national organizations [Socially Responsible Agricultural Project](#) and [Food & Water Watch](#), the new regulation sets health-focused standards that CAFO owners will be required to meet in establishing operations or increasing the size and scope of existing facilities in Codorus Township.

The unanimous vote in favor of the ordinance was recorded before a packed room in the Codorus Township Building during the Board of Supervisors' bi-monthly meeting.

"We're grateful that our elected officials are listening to the facts and putting the health of Codorus Township residents first," said Brian Kaltreider, President of Friends of York County Family Farms. "We support agriculture here, but it needs to be safe and sustainable. If Hillandale had its way, at this very moment they'd be filling new poultry houses with hundreds of thousands of birds creating pollution and health issues that this community cannot bear."

Codorus Township is home to a Hillandale poultry operation housing 1.3 million laying hens and an egg-washing facility that have combined to create difficult and unhealthy conditions for nearby residents, including widespread ammonia and manure odors, large-scale fly populations, constant noise from steady truck traffic and 24-hour exhaust fan operations, and the potential contamination of private wells drawing on an EPA-designated 'sole source' aquifer -- the drinking water resource for Codorus Township and other municipalities.

Recently, Hillandale Farms proposed adding a 1.7 million bird operation -- more than doubling the number of birds housed in the town of 4,000 -- as well as a new feed mill and an egg-washing facility within town limits.

"This new ordinance is the difference between health and sickness in Codorus Township," said Maria Payan, field coordinator for Socially Responsible Agricultural Project, a group working in farming communities across the nation impacted by factory farms. "The CAFO industry has proven time and again that it cannot and will not control itself and the pollution it brings to rural communities. Approval of this ordinance sends a strong message to CAFO owners and the public officials who support them that communities have options."

The approved ordinance presented to the Board by Harrisburg-based environmental attorney Bill Cluck includes protection protocols such as proper spacing distances between animal operations with fines for violators, exhaust fan filters for better community air quality, ultraviolet light systems to kill pathogens and a set facility inspection regimen funded by operator fees held in escrow.

Evidence of public health hazards associated with industrial poultry operations, presented by researchers at the [Johns Hopkins Center for a Livable Future \(CLF\)](#), informed the decision for a health ordinance. In an April 2015 letter to the Codorus Township Board of Supervisors, CLF stated, "Based on our own investigation of similar layer operations and evidence from numerous scientific studies of industrial poultry operations, the proposed operation may present a range of health risks to members of surrounding communities." Concerns included

- infections resulting from the potential transmission of pathogens from poultry operations to nearby residents via flies or contaminated air or water;
- health effects (including asthma, bronchitis and allergic reactions) associated with exposure to air pollution from poultry operations; and
- health effects (such as thyroid problems, neurological impairments and liver damage) associated with exposure to nitrates, drug residues and other hazards that may be present in ground and/or surface waters contaminated by manure from poultry operations.

The high cost of industry-driven public health risk and environmental damage continues to be a hot-button topic across the Keystone State and the region. Through its new health ordinance, Codorus Township presents a solution through which many municipalities across the state and the nation can address threats to human health, air quality and vital drinking water resources.

"Whether its unsustainable factory farms or highly polluting fracking operations, Pennsylvania has a troubling history of taking local citizens' rights away while giving industry a free pass to destroy communities," said Scott Edwards, co-director of Food & Water Justice at Food & Water Watch. "With this ordinance, the people of Codorus Township are rightfully demanding a voice in what their neighborhoods look like and are no longer willing to allow industries to place profit before public health."

A copy of the approved Codorus Township Health Ordinance is available [here](#).

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#### **About Friends of York County Family Farms**

York County Friends of Family Farms is a group supporting family farms and concerned about health, environmental, and ecosystem effects of an industrial egg processing facility in our community. For more information, please visit [www.stopthechickens.org](http://www.stopthechickens.org).

#### **About Socially Responsible Agricultural Project**

Socially Responsible Agricultural Project provides free, professional assistance to communities working to protect themselves from factory farms and their impact on local communities and populations, and to those who are trying to reclaim agriculture by producing and marketing sustainable agricultural goods. For more information, go to [www.sraproject.org](http://www.sraproject.org).

#### **About Food & Water Watch**

Food & Water Watch works to ensure the food, water and fish we consume is safe, accessible and sustainable. So we can all enjoy and trust in what we eat and drink, we help people take charge of where their food comes from, keep clean, affordable, public tap water flowing freely to our homes, protect the environmental quality of oceans, force government to do its job protecting citizens, and educate about the importance of keeping shared resources under public control. More information can be found at [www.foodandwaterwatch.org](http://www.foodandwaterwatch.org).