

From Family Farms to Corporate Control

CAFOs dominate the agriculture industry—to the downfall of rural communities

- Many CAFOs are owned by **multinational corporations**, like Smithfield Foods, Inc. which reports having 139 company-owned farms—in addition to contract farms and feed mills—in Missouri ²
- CAFOs use **industrial methods** to mass-produce meat at minimal cost
- Corporate consolidation in the livestock sector means fewer facilities now produce a larger share of the meat Americans consume and **outcompete smaller, independent farmers**



85%
of meat
consumed in the
U.S. is produced
by just **four**
corporations ¹

Corporate consolidation poses a bleak picture for rural America

- CAFOs offer very few jobs for local communities because...
 - Fewer laborers produce the same amount of meat as smaller farms
 - As many as 75% of CAFO workers are migrant workers who may tolerate inhumane and hazardous conditions in order to work and live in the U.S. ³



● CAFOs contribute to a crisis facing small farmers, including...

- The loss of Missouri's small farms: Nearly 19,000 midsize farms (50-499 acres) were lost from 1982 to 2017, while very large farms (2000+ acres) increased by more than 1,500 ⁴
- A net loss in annual farm income for over half of the nation's farm households ⁵
- Mental health issues and suicide among rural farmers ⁶



What can you do?

- Join MCE's CAFO Action Network
- Visit MCE's CAFO Toolkit
- Buy local using MCE's St. Louis Local Food Guide

Find these resources at moenvironment.org



Contact Melissa Vatterott at
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1. Public Justice Food Project. <https://food.publicjustice.net/communityresources/>
2. Smithfield Foods. www.smithfieldfoods.com/about-smithfield/our-operations
3. Purdue Extension. www.extension.purdue.edu/extmedia/ID/ID-362-W.pdf
4. USDA Census of Agriculture 1982-2017, Missouri statistics. <https://www.nass.usda.gov/AgCensus/>

5. USDA Farm Household Income Forecast. www.ers.usda.gov/topics/farm-economy/farm-household-well-being/farm-household-income-forecast/
6. The Guardian, "Why are American Farmers Killing Themselves?" www.theguardian.com/us-news/2017/dec/06/why-are-americas-farmers-killing-themselves-in-record-number