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.
- 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.

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.

- 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.
  - A net loss in annual farm income for over half of the nation's farm households.
  - Mental health issues and suicide among rural farmers.

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