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Mega-dairy moratorium bills introduced in Oregon state legislature

Stand Up To Factory Farms coalition urges immediate action to protect Oregon's climate and communities from mega-dairy pollution

Salem, OR - Thanks to groundbreaking legislation introduced by Representative Rob Nosse and Senator Michael Dembrow, a much-needed moratorium on new and expanding industrial dairies above 2,500 cows has a chance to see the light of day.

Supported by the Stand Up to Factory Farms coalition, the moratorium would allow a pause in the permitting of new and expanding mega-dairies until meaningful protections can be enacted to protect Oregon's air, water, climate, rural communities, small farmers and animal welfare.

"This legislation could not come at a more critical time for Oregon's climate," says **Emma Newton, Oregon Organizer with Food & Water Watch and the Stand Up to Factory Farms coalition**. "Representative Nosse and Senator Dembrow lead the charge as Oregonians fight back against dangerous industrial dairy facilities."

"Mega-dairy pollution doesn't impact all Oregonians equally. Our rural communities- particularly Latinx and indigenous communities- have long lived with polluted air and unsafe drinking water," says **Ana Elisa Wilson, Community Organizer at Oregon Rural Action**. "A mega-dairy moratorium would protect Oregon's rural communities from further harm."

"Mega-dairies use as much water as a city the size of Bend," says **Brian Posewitz, staff attorney at WaterWatch of Oregon**. "Our streams, rivers and groundwater aquifers are too strained to handle that extra load. We appreciate Representative Nosse and Senator Dembrow introducing these bills."

"Since 2000, Oregon's small and pastured dairy farmers have struggled to compete with mega-dairies flooding the milk market and driving down prices," says **Amy Wong, Policy Director at Friends of Family Farmers**. "A mega-dairy moratorium is the break our small farmers need to stay in business and build a resilient local food system."

Mega-dairies cause air pollution, contribute to climate change, extract large amounts of water from Oregon's rivers, streams, and aquifers, contaminate drinking water, harm the welfare of animals, and push family-scale farms out of business. Advocates warn that the increase in mega-dairies is a crisis for Oregon's communities and natural resources that can only be solved

by a “time-out” on the construction and expansion of these facilities. Oregon is poised to be the next hot spot for mega-dairies unless the legislature takes immediate action.

“Because of lax state regulation, frontline communities pay for mega-dairy air and water pollution with their health. But Oregonians deserve a food system that is resilient, healthy, and fair for everyone. That’s why we need a time out to ensure a just system that does not sacrifice people in the pursuit of profits,” says **Amy van Saun, Senior Attorney with the Center for Food Safety.**

“It is past time to protect our natural resources from the overuse and pollution of mega-dairies. A mega-dairy moratorium ensures Oregon’s water supply, including treasured waterways like the Columbia River, will be safe from waste runoff, says **Lauren Goldberg, Legal and Program Director at Columbia Riverkeeper.**”

“Mega-dairies operate with little regard for the well-being of the thousands of cows forced inside their concrete walls or surrounding communities,” says **Animal Legal Defense Fund Executive Director Stephen Wells.** “Oregon urgently needs better legal safeguards put in place to protect animals and residents from the threats posed by mega-dairies.”

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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.