



AFAN IN ACTION

May 2023 Monthly Update

This past month we attended several county zoning hearings and a meeting hosted by the Nebraska Department of Agriculture about county zoning processes. For those not familiar, in most counties, if you want to build certain buildings, including a livestock operation, the county requires you to obtain a Conditional Use Permit. This process is usually fairly seamless, with a public hearing in front of the planning and zoning commission, which will vote and provide a non-binding recommendation to the county board. This can either be a recommendation to approve the permit application or a recommendation to deny it. Regardless of the recommendation, the application goes to the county board for another public hearing and ultimately a vote to approve the permit or deny it based on the facts of the application and how it fits with the county's regulations.

The applicant must then pursue the other required permits including from the Nebraska Department of Environment and Energy (formerly DEQ), and a good permit from the regional NRD. NDEE regulates impacts to the waters of the state including the design of the building and manure storage to ensure it doesn't leak and how manure is applied to fields to ensure it doesn't run off. If the livestock producer fails to get any one of the three permits (county, regional, and state), then the operation cannot be built.

One question in the county public hearing is, why don't they get the other permits first? The short answer is location. The NDEE permit and the NRD permit depend upon the facility's actual location. The location factors into the engineering and design work that is required by NDEE. IF the livestock producer obtains an NDEE permit first but then the county denies the location permit then the NDEE permit would be void too.

One challenge with the county permit is that it is local. Folks that are in support and in opposition usually know each other, often very well. This can create tension and stress that no one wants. But at the end of the day, the county has laid out a set of regulations and if the livestock producer meets those requirements, then they should be granted the permit to operate. That is our system of government in a nutshell. In a State that values private property rights to do what you want as long as you follow the rules, few should object to this outcome.

As we work to grow the livestock industry it's important to recognize the significant impact livestock facilities have on the rural economy. These are significant

investments that often exceed the cost of the processing facility. For example, a dairy farm costs about \$10,000 per cow; a 10,000-cow dairy would cost roughly \$100 million! A 2,500-head swine finishing barn will cost nearly \$1 million. What other industry would invest so heavily in the rural part of the state?

We have all the feedstuffs, the land that can benefit from manure fertilizer, and the communities that will benefit from the processing of livestock products as well as the manufacturing of supplies that go into livestock housing and production. Value-added agriculture, including livestock, is how the state will continue to grow and provide opportunities in rural Nebraska for the next generations to come!

Highlights

- Attended a zoning hearing in Gage County
- Attended ADPI Conference
- Assisted with a Kindergarten day at Larson Dairy
- Toured 4 livestock operations with 140 Northeast Community College students
- Spoke and networked with County Officials at NE Dept of Ag's NACO Summit
- Our staff toured LPP, Wiechman Pig Company, and the new Wholestone expansion in Fremont, Nebraska

Looking Ahead



Save the Date

June
15: [AFAN/ NSDA Golf Tournament](#)

Thank you to our partners for your support!
Not a partner? [JOIN US!](#)

Alliance for the Future of Agriculture in Nebraska | becomeafan.org



AFAN | 5225 S. 16th Street, Lincoln, NE 68512

[Unsubscribe rylees@a-fan.org](#)

[Update Profile](#) | [Constant Contact Data Notice](#)

Sent by rylees@a-fan.org powered by



Try email marketing for free today!