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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Indiana Factory Farm Experts Gather to Discuss a State Under Siege**

*Ag and environment community shares research, expertise supporting smarter, safer, healthier policies for the Hoosier state*

**MOLALLA, OR—JULY 31, 2014**—The 2014 edition of the Indiana CAFO Watch conference met this week in Chesterfield (Madison County), supported by the [Socially Responsible Agricultural Project \(SRAP\)](#). The annual meeting hosted more than 70 experts and community members who are monitoring and challenging the growth and impact of confined animal feeding operations (CAFOs) in the state. The gathering brought together farmers, academics and advocates sharing information and seeking solutions to the environmental hazards and public health risks associated with Indiana’s sprawling mega farming industry.

Indiana is the fifth-largest hog-producing state with more than 600 CAFOs dotting the state. Additionally, recent statistics report that 2.6 million pigs were imported into Indiana in 2012 from other hog-producing state, adding to its growing reputation as an at-risk, CAFO-burdened state.

“Indiana is becoming a factory farm for outside interests,” said Terry Spence, a regional coordinator with SRAP and one of the meeting’s speakers. “U.S. farmlands are being used to support the bottom-line of international industrial agriculture, and that puts the health and sustainability of rural communities at-risk. Lawmakers in every state -- and particularly Indiana -- need to back the people who live and work on the land, not faceless, nameless stockholders.”

Presentations were provided by several expert speakers, including Dr. Jillian Fry, Project Director at the Johns Hopkins Center for a Livable Future; Dr. John Ikerd, Professor Emeritus of Agricultural Economics at the University of Missouri; and Cyndi Wagner, Chief of Targeted Monitoring Section in the Watershed Assessment and Planning Branch of the Office of Water Quality at the Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM).

According to IDEM, CAFOs make up 20 percent of the regulated farms in Indiana, yet they produce and process a full 80 percent of the state’s food industry-related animals.

“The government’s own statistics tell the story of what’s going wrong in Indiana,” said Indiana CAFO Watch’s Barbara Sha. “The CAFOs have gotten a lot bigger, and they’ve also gotten a lot better at producing massive amounts of animal waste, public water pollutants and potential community health risks. We’re extremely grateful that SRAP has made it possible for all of us to gather under one roof to tackle this critical problem that affects us all.”

Indiana CAFO Watch's annual conference is a mainstay of the pro-family farm effort in Indiana. The organization is fully independent, receives no outside funding and works on a fully volunteer basis.

"As with far too many states, the health, welfare and environmental stability of Indiana has a target on its back – and it was put there by industrial agriculture," said SRAP CEO, Kendra Kimbirauskas. "It's rewarding to provide support and partnership to Indiana CAFO Watch. It's a much-needed gathering place for those who have a better future in mind for the state and its people."

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#### **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. More information can be found at [www.sraproject.org](http://www.sraproject.org).