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PRESENTATION

INTENSIVE LIVESTOCK INDUSTRY AND FACTORY OPERATIONS

March 13, 2007

Killarney Legion Hall

by

Carole M. Kentner
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Boissevain, Manitoba
ROK OEO

I wish to introduce myself, Carole Kentner, and my husband, Bill Kentner from Boissevain. We are living in the RM of Morton and are 1 ½ miles from one hog factory, 5 miles north of another, and 3 miles NE of a large cattle operation. We unsuccessfully fought the Hytec/Bartley/Sage Farm hog factory located 1 ½ miles from our home on the N.W. 1-4-19. Because of this and the research I have done that there are problems associated with this industry.

Many of these comments are from personal experience and research although many of my questions have far reaching ramifications. This will not be a "glitzy" presentation as my computer skills do not include PowerPoint. Please accept these shortcomings.

For years, Dr. David Suzuki has been "a voice in the wilderness" for the issue of environmentalism. In South-Western Manitoba, Dr. Bill Paton has been saying many of the same things. It is now becoming apparent that their voices are correct. This review, in my opinion, would not be talking place if the problems of Lake Winnipeg and its' environment were not coming to the forefront. In other words, many people are recognizing that there are problems in the environment. Dr. Suzuki has said that 15% of all Canadian children are coping with asthma and that 1 in 10 women will be diagnosed with breast cancer. For the health care system, these are alarming statistics. Is the prevalence of all kinds of cancer due to the lack of care of our living surroundings? What is this telling us about our greedy lifestyle? I think that our environment is a major cause.

Environment is defined by the World Book Dictionary as "all of the surrounding things, conditions, and influences affecting the growth or development of living things." I read this to mean not only the physical environment but also the economic, health and social environment around us.

Problems that I see as being important include:

1. Technical Reviews and Drainage:

The technical review on the Hytek/Bartley/Sage Farms facility was flawed. It stated there were no drainage ditches in the area. There is a ditch which was a problem for the drainage people three or four years ago. After a lengthy court battle, the ditch was put through to the south, with the appropriate gates, to drain into the Ninga Channel. This water eventually ends up in Lake Winnipeg. The majority of the spread fields border this ditch. The Technical Review has never

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acknowledged this error and the Council of the Rural Municipality of Turtle Mountain ignored it. Furthermore, all municipal road ditches in this area drain into one of the major conductors of water that eventually ends up polluting Lake Winnipeg. If one review was flawed, then how many others were because the review personnel only speak with the proponents of the facilities, not those opposed.

Sloughs on the edges of the ditches drain into or are a part of many ditches. Nutrients from spread fields leach into these sloughs and drainage areas. (Pictures are included at the end of this presentation.) After the snowfall of the past two weeks, water will be accumulating in the sloughs. In our area and as shown in the pictures after a big rain the water will back up into many of the spread fields. Nutrients will be leached out and then sent downstream as the water recede. Our water from this area eventually ends up in Lake Winnipeg but the pollutants will also have lodged in the Pembina River, Pelican Lake, Rock Lake, and the Red River.

For every law that is passed, there is usually a way around it. I have been told how to circumvent the legislation for grassy areas around sloughs so that they can continue to be drained. If many of these operations had not been approved, problems would not have to be faced. What about enforcement? How can penalties be made effective? How can producers not have a "heads up" that inspectors are in the area? Can the Provincial Government afford to pay the enforcers? These are economic questions for the Government as well. Where will the money come from?

The hog industry claims that it is over-regulated and that they are environmentally responsible. As in all of society, some producers are very responsible. Some are not. We have all heard of the dumping of hog carcasses in creeks or near waterways and the "slap on the wrist" to those who put more nitrogen and phosphorus on their land than it can hold. These reports give the appearance of this being the tip of an iceberg. We all must take some lessons from the environmental disasters in Europe, the eastern U.S.A. and, closer to home, in Quebec and Ontario. The factory farm industry seems to be moving out of the Eastern Provinces and into Manitoba. What happens when our land is also sullied and our waterways clogged with algae. People living along the Ninga Channel have had to have a back hoe into the area to pull out cattails that are thriving on the algae blooms in the Channel. Will all the efforts and money spent over the Devil's Lake diversion be for naught if we do our own polluting and kill our own Lake Winnipeg?

2. Air Quality

Hydrogen sulfide has been proven to be an emission from factory farms and has also been proven to be a killer gas. "Sour gas" or hydrogen sulfide seminars have to taken in the oil fields to make sure that no one is hurt. We now have the danger in our backyard and it is worrisome.

Odors prevent people from enjoying outdoor activities. Healthy Living is promoting exercise out of doors. They recommend walking, gardening, cross country skiing to mention three. It is not possible to do this if the smell of livestock and poison gas surround you.

I presented a Doctor's certificate to the conditional use hearing as did Lois Nay saying that we are asthmatic and a intensive livestock operation close to us would be detrimental to our health. I have enclosed my copy for you. I do know I have airborne allergies and that each year the symptoms increase. I will soon have to be taking medication daily to control the symptoms. One of the reasons may be increased pollution in the air surrounding our home.

3. People do not want to build near a hog barn. One case is of young couple in the Rural Municipality of Morton who have already decided not to build on land that has been in their family since 1885 that would have been 1 ½ miles away from a hog factory. Instead they chose to build in the town of Boissevain. This shows that soon the area will be farmed by absentee land owners and this will hurt the economic resources of the Municipality. "...the steady loss of rural neighbors has been dragging us down." (David Neufeld, "Making Space", The Recorder, Boissevain Manitoba, Saturday Jan. 27, 2007, p. 7)

4. Occupational and health hazards. Many people are able to work effectively in the barns but many are having health problems related to working in the hog barns. We have a friend who worked in a barn but has developed asthma due to his employment. He is off work of any kind and is on long-term disability. Many people are not choosing the hog industry as a way of life and workers are having to be imported. This is apparent at the Maple Leaf processing plant in Brandon.

Health problems for consumers are also presenting themselves due to the overuse of medications such as antibiotics and the fact these medications are showing up in the meat.

5. Is this industry sustainable? At the present, hog factories are in financial trouble. The high American/Canadian dollar is making many operations unprofitable. Slaughter facilities are closing fostering a greater dependence on American facilities. Rather than becoming a value added industry, Canada will become, once again, a primary resource. This had proven, over the years, to being a poor choice. In order to make ends meet, more hogs will be deemed necessary, and then the whole cycle of environmental issues will arise. Returning to the original definition, economic risks are also an environmental risk. In the Brandon Sun of Wednesday, March 7, there was an article about the loss of a Japanese contract for Berkshire hogs. This loss has ended the industry around Brandon. This is another example of being a primary source, not a value added source, of an industry.

We have seen the problems with the cattle industry over the B.S.E. crisis when a border closes. What happens with other livestock if this happens again? Disease can strike even with the best of precautions.

Will this factory industry deplete our resources for profit and then be gone after our water and environment are ruined? The industry itself says it is a good steward. Are only **some** in the industry this way?

6. Is big always best?

Many people are talking about sustainability and are now looking into the efficiencies of small operations. A Farm Focus seminar in Boissevain looked at this very question. Results of the seminars will be appearing later. "Of late, our general belief that larger farms are more profitable than smaller farms has come into question" Dr. Peter Stonehouse's study has been quoted to substantiate this statement. (David Neufeld, "Making Space" The Recorder, Boissevain, Manitoba Sat. Jan. 27, 2007, p. 7)

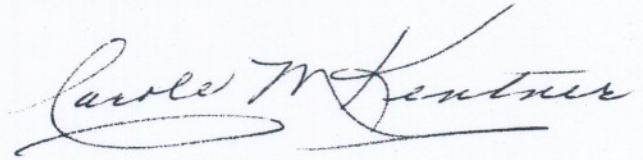
We need to look at what the big railways are doing by closing "unprofitable?" lines. What if the big grain companies out of the U.S.A. take over the marketing of grain? What if only one or two companies control the livestock industry? What will then happen to our cheap food?

Looking into the future, what happens when barns disintegrate and have to have something done with them? What happens if there is contamination of the land and water by spills? What happens if the water supply is compromised? What is the potential for the loss of infrastructure such as bridges and roads? What happens when the province continues to download roads, bridges, water treatment to towns and municipalities? Are we or our youth going to be able to afford these factory industry? Are we compromising our future?

I am sure you have and will continue to hear all these statements and

questions that I have raised. I sincerely hope that you will listen and heed our arguments as much scientific research is available to support them. I hope, by my speaking up, that you will see a genuine concern about the impact of our society on Planet Earth. I work in a school setting where one focus is to teach our children responsible use and care of our environment. Unfortunately, in the name of money and profits, we adults are unable to be good examples. Somewhere the lessons in general and in the factory operations have been lost.

Thank you. I am willing to answer any of your questions.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Carole M. Kentner". The signature is fluid and elegant, with a large initial 'C' and 'K'.

Carole M. Kentner

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June 6, 2005

To whom it may concern:

**RE: Carole M. Kentner
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This lady is a patient suffering from asthma, which is triggered by odors and airborne allergens. It seems to be increasing yearly as she gets older.

As well, asthma seems to be a more and more growing concern worldwide because of pollution, etc.

I think this lady will be best served by avoiding odors, especially a pig barn in the near vicinity. It will be much better for her health.

Kind Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'A.M. Nell', written over a large, stylized flourish.

Dr. A.M. Nell, M.B., Ch.B. (Pret)
AMN/Is



Hytex / Sage Farms / Bartley
Burns just behind evergreens
lagoon behind deciduous trees
Slough in front, bordering on v including the ditch
July 2005



Water + Ditch coming into NINGA Channel
Graham Tripp farm in background
July 2005



Ditch + water flowing into NINGA channel
July 2005



Floods receding on Ninga Channel
Ninga in background
July 2005



Ninga Channel with floodwater coming into it
from road ditch July 2005

Farmers struggle to save hog breed

BY MATT GOERZEN

Producers of a high-end Manitoba pork meat are fighting to save their industry from the slaughterhouse following the loss of a major foreign market.

And the battleground will be the white-linen tables of fine dining establishments in Toronto, New York and Winnipeg.

Call it the 'other red meat.' The black Berkshire breed of swine is an unusual animal compared to its more well-known pinkish cousin favoured by hog producers — and Maple Leaf slaughtering plants — around the country.

Berkshire hogs are swine royalty, dating back more than 300 years to the English House of Windsor, where they were bred for their exceptional flavour and tenderness.

"They're a heritage animal, so they haven't been bred for loin or leanness," said Bruce Daum, a Berkshire pork farmer near Brandon who recently sold off all his animals. "It's a red, marbled meat. There's more back fat on (the animal). The Japanese love it because of that fat — that's what carries the flavour."

About 500 Berkshire animals are produced in Manitoba every week, and until about two weeks ago many were slaughtered at the Springhill Farms slaughter facility in Neepawa, and then shipped west to Saskatchewan Specialty Meats, where the carcasses were processed.

Nearly 80 per cent of all Berkshire pork moving through the Saskatoon processing plant was shipped to Japan. That changed when the plant lost its biggest customer two weeks ago and couldn't replace it.

Daum, who started a Berkshire hog finishing operation on his farm two years ago, said the loss of the market was due to labelling changes that took effect in Japan only recently.

"They've changed the wording on their Kurobuta (Japanese Black Hog)," Daum told the Sun. "What we were doing is selling into the Japanese market, and customers couldn't tell the difference between their market and



Chef Alexander Svenne (left) and wife and co-owner Danielle Carignan Svenne are having an invitation-only Berkshire pig party next week at Winnipeg's Bistro 7 1/4.

ours. They thought it was local. "Now ours is labelled differently than homegrown Kurobuta. The government made sure it was different."

Once the Japanese buyer realized he couldn't make as much money from Canadian Berkshire pork because of the labelling switch, he dumped the contract. That, coupled with the higher Canadian dollar and high grain and oilseed prices, has left Manitoba Berkshire pork producers in free fall.

"There's people downsizing, there's no doubt about it. With grain prices as high as they are — corn has never been this high," Daum said. "They're taking food that should be fed to people and animals, and using it to make ethanol."

"It's becoming very costly, and we can't use any byproduct from the ethanol industry to feed the pigs because the proteins are all wrong."

Daum sold off his own stock through Maple Leaf into the white pig market at a \$40 per pig loss so that he could work full-time at improving the Canadian and American market share for the specialty pork meat.

Berkshire pork meat is already popular in high-end eateries in Toronto. The trick is to open up new markets so that

Manitoba producers can survive. Daum will travel to Toronto next week to start extolling the virtues of the product.

"We're going forward with serious markets."

Part of that market plan includes the city of Winnipeg and a small but top-rated restaurant known as Bistro 7 1/4. The bistro's owners know a good thing when they try it, and on March 12, they intend to make sure the best chefs in the city know it, too.

"We're having a Berkshire pig party on Monday night," bistro office manager Kiirsten May said yesterday. "It's by special invitation only."

Every chef in Winnipeg who is interested in regional cooking is expected, as well as other chefs, who have been asked to prepare Berkshire dishes. The chefs include Ben Kramer at the Dandelion Eatery and Barbara O'Hara from Dessert Sensations.

"It's an interesting event because of the types of restaurants invited," May said. "They're our competitors, and yet we'll all be here. That's interesting to get everyone under one roof. It's not a competition, it's a party."

Bistro owner Alexander Svenne and his wife Danielle decided to raise the profile of the product after meeting Daum,

and learning of the predicament that Manitoba Berkshire producers are facing.

May said this kind of party is a great way to introduce Berkshire to a new market.

"Very few people know about it, and that seems to be the case with lots of things in Manitoba."

May believes the Berkshire is completely superior to any other kind of pork meat produced in Manitoba.

"White pigs raised to be processed by Maple Leaf taste like the barn. Berkshire tastes like pork should taste — it's raised free range and comes with a fat cap on it."

She also hinted it seems to go very well with dark ale, which is why Manitoba's own Fort Garry Brewing Company will be represented at the party with its rich, dark ale.

As for Daum, he and others like him are counting on these new markets to keep the industry alive in the province. If his efforts are successful, he plans to return to his farm and start up again.

"I think it's going to be a matter of months," he said.

"But if it doesn't work, I'm going to sell the farm. I don't need to practise working. I've had enough practice."

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FPNS