

# Young producer shouldn't suffer



## Getting Started

By BOB GUNZENHAUSER

**S**UPPOSE when one wades into a controversial subject one should expect to either make enemies or gain friends — maybe a little of both.

### Key Points

- Young farmer who wants to build a hog barn near Clear Lake faces opposition.
- He has met state DNR rules and pledges responsible management.
- It is important for both sides in Iowa's livestock debate to seek shared solutions.

Regardless, from my side of the fence, I think its time to say something on the

often contentious issue of livestock production in our state.

Let me first say that I am on the board of the Iowa Farmers Union, which is dedicated to preserving independent family farms. I am also a member of the Iowa Farm Bureau, primarily to obtain health insurance for my family. So, I get to hear a lot of thoughts and opinion on the subject.

I've been reading the story of Andy Muff in Clear Lake. A beginning farmer

at 27 years old, Andy wants to expand his family's hog operation by putting up two 1,240-head buildings about two miles from Clear Lake. He and his soon-to-be-wife will reside at the location.

Andy has jumped through the hoops; he's filed the appropriate papers, presented his plans to the Environmental Protection Commission (and been grilled by some members) and has spoken in front of concerned citizens in his area. Overall, he appears to be the model of a good neighbor and steward, as far as I can tell.

### Iowa needs livestock

However, it is disheartening to hear about protesters and EPC board members going after this young man like he's a terrorist, out to pollute Clear Lake and coat the roads with manure. While two miles from Clear Lake may not be the best location, it meets the standards set forth. Maybe moving the operation away from town would be better, but at the moment, this is a legal location.

Sure, it might be better for everyone if we still had 50- to 100-sow farms: more farms raising fewer pigs ... maybe more business would be generated in town ... more family members making a living on the farm. It's a very favorable vision.

However, for better or worse, the marketplace has changed. Farms have grown and livestock concentration has gone up. In order to adapt to this new level of density, state government, in the past 10 years, has introduced significant amounts of regulations and rules to protect property and the environment.

### Thoughts on the issue

Personally, I think the level of regulation is enough for now. It enforces against bad operators, but also causes good operators to perform better, even while laying an extra burden at their feet. I don't think a confined animal feeding operation is necessarily a bad thing in and of itself; it just depends on how it is operated and managed.

I'd rather see more guys like Andy Muff living and working on the farm with his family than have some out-of-area operation move in, with the profits going back to investors. These already exist in Iowa, and I don't personally care for them. We don't need any more Jack DeCosters. Sure, guys like Andy may be part of a supply chain, organized by integrators; but there is still a level of personal involvement.

Iowa needs livestock to consume our corn, soybeans and ethanol byproducts. Iowa needs young farmers to raise the livestock. Let's not punish someone for playing by the rules set forth, attempting to adapt to the marketplace, in order to make a living.

*Editor's Note: Gunzenhauser was the winner of the "Farming is in your Blood" contest sponsored by Wallaces Farmer, Bayer CropScience, the Iowa Soybean Association and the Iowa Corn Growers Association.*

## THE SIMPLE MATH OF HYBRIDS

# How Better Seed Builds a Better Bottom Line



### Better Breeding Pays.

Add up the benefits of  hybrids: fewer inputs, in-the-plant insect protection, better growth in dry weather, stronger plants, less labor and cost all season.

How do we get there? With one of the richest privately owned germplasm pools in the world and a proprietary doubled-haploid breeding process that gets traited hybrids into your fields two years faster.

### It's Your Business. Do the Math.

The results are real: 761 Top-10 F.I.R.S.T. winners and 74 NCGA State Champions. Last year, in 5,600 locations, our new hybrid introductions out-yielded competitive brands with similar traits by 8.13 bushels per acre.

That's no surprise to growers who know that paying a little more for superior seed can cost less and deliver better yield.



**GREAT LAKES HYBRIDS**  
Generations Ahead

1-800-257-SEED  
[www.GreatLakesHybrids.com/fp](http://www.GreatLakesHybrids.com/fp)

YieldGard® Plus with Roundup Ready® Corn 2 provides maximum insect protection with excellent crop safety.

### Talk to us!

Got a question for Bob? Send it to [farmbob@farmprogress.com](mailto:farmbob@farmprogress.com) and he'll try to answer it in a future issue.