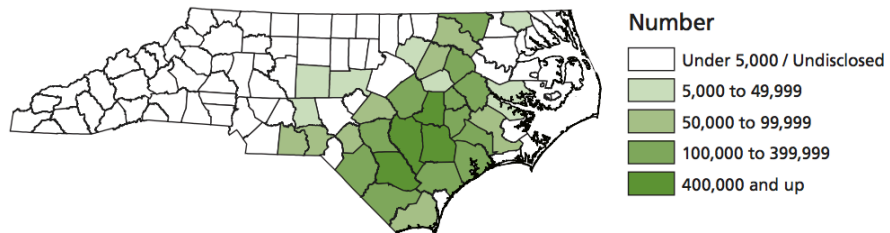


HOW DO HOG CAFOS AFFECT COMMUNITIES IN EASTERN NORTH CAROLINA AND WHAT POLICY CAN BE ENACTED TO PROTECT THESE CITIZENS?

Figure 1. Leading counties with the highest concentration of hog CAFOs include Duplin and Sampson county with over 2 million hogs (NCA).



What's a Hog CAFO?

Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations, otherwise known as CAFOs, have presented several long-standing concerns in surrounding communities. CAFO operators entice rural communities with the empty promise of jobs and economic development. Preferred targets for CAFOs are regions with persistent poverty. But as many communities have revealed, the hopes of economic revival are often accompanied by a harsh reality and falsehoods.

What's the Issue?

1

ECONOMIC OUTSOURCING

Since many CAFOs are vertically integrated (meaning operators own and control the hatcheries, feed mills, production, and even slaughter facilities), they often purchase within their own organization rather than from local businesses, that leads to little local economic stimulus. Building materials, equipment, feed, and feeder animals are sourced from the cheapest outside supplier rather than from local industries.

2

ENVIRONMENTAL RACISM

Individuals experiencing these symptoms were in low socioeconomic communities of color that follows patterns of environmental racism and injustice in which large industry and governments exploit their vulnerability to dump the dirty elements and backlashes of pork production on them.

3

PUBLIC HEALTH CONCERNS

The health and living conditions are an urgent concern for nearby inhabitants. Individuals that live near hog farms and waste pits reported physical symptoms of sinus, respiratory and nausea problems than those that do not live near these agriculture sites (Wendee).

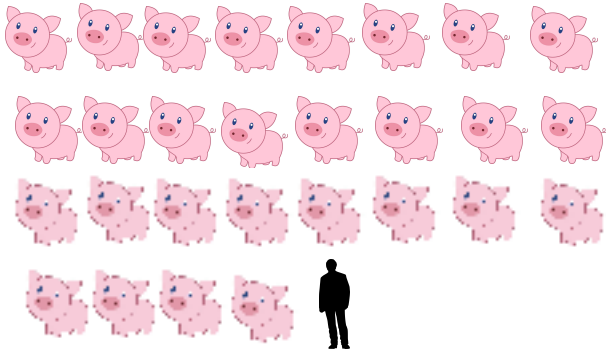


Figure 2. In Eastern North Carolina hogs out number people 28 to 1 and produce two to five times as much waste as a human. In order to deal with this large quantity of manure, CAFOs pump waste into large lagoons that create negative externalities for nearby inhabitants (Wendee).

Obstacles

In North Carolina and the US in general, dozens of regulations exist on both a state and national level that inequitably benefit large-scale, industrialized hog farms. Hog farmers have relatively little oversight and are often not held accountable for the environmental and social impacts of their operations. In North Carolina counties, Duplin and Sampson in particular, the regulatory systems for hog CAFOs are often inefficient and untrustworthy (Bauerlein).

Potential Solutions

1. Invest in Biogas Technology

It is important to note that the goal is to not completely shut down hog farms, but rather to pressure companies to “embrace newer, but costlier, methods of handling waste, such as converting it to energy” (Bauerlein). Energy conversion as biogas, which converts waste to energy via bacterial digestion (Pfister). Retrofitting waste management systems is costly, but is an effective way to preserve existing farms while promoting sustainability.

2. Move Lagoons Away From Floodplains

Since Hurricane Floyd and Florence there is a strong push to relocate lagoons from flood plains. One way to encourage more sustainable waste management would be to expand programs like the Lagoon Conversion Program (LCP) and the lagoon relocation program so they are better publicized and better funded (Karan). Another would be to legally make large companies that own the hogs responsible for upgrading farms and lagoons rather than the rural farmers who are contracted to manage them.

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