



April 1, 2021

Chair Beyer and Members of the Senate Committee on Energy and Environment,

On behalf of World Animal Protection and our supporters in Oregon and throughout the United States, I am writing in strong support of SB 583, which would enact a moratorium on new or expanding mega-dairies of over 2,500 cows.

Cows in mega-dairies typically live their entire lives indoors, only moving between tiny stalls and milking parlors until they are spent—no longer productive—and killed. In mega-dairies, cows often stand on hard concrete, which leads to foot damage and exacerbates lameness, and often stand or lay in their own manure. These conditions result in stress disorders, stunted growth, and chronic lameness.

The extreme confinement, lack of mobility, and intensive milking regimen all contribute to routine and continuous administration of antibiotics to prevent infection. Routine use of antibiotics in farmed animal production is driving the rapid emergence and spread of bacteria resistant to the medicines used to fight them. Antibiotic-resistant bacteria—or “superbugs”—have been detected in the US food supply, in the environment surrounding large Confined Animal Feed Operations (CAFOs), and on crops amended with CAFO manure. Superbugs render common infections and surgeries more dangerous, leading to higher rates of hospitalization and an estimated 35,000 deaths per year in the US.

Mega-dairies are also a significant contributor to the climate crisis, discharging greenhouse gases into the atmosphere and consuming carbon-intensive feed and fossil fuel inputs. Even facilities that use methane digesters do not avoid these climate impacts. Digesters do nothing to reduce other air emissions or mitigate the many other externalities from dairy CAFO production and manure management. Instead, digesters create a market for factory farm gas, incentivizing further scaling-up and entrenching the mega-dairy model.

The moratorium would halt the development of new mega-dairies and prevent the expansion of existing ones. This will ensure that this low-welfare model reliant on harmful inputs such as antibiotics, is unable to spread further within the state and will give Oregonians an opportunity to address the harms from existing mega-dairies.

Mega-dairies cannot provide cows with a life worth living and pose significant risk to Oregon's environment and communities.

Please protect animals and Oregonians. Pass SB 583.

Sincerely,



Cameron Harsh  
Farming Campaign Manager  
World Animal Protection US

[www.worldanimalprotection.us](http://www.worldanimalprotection.us)

535 8th Avenue, 3rd Floor, New York, NY 10018

T: 1.800.883.9772 F: 1.646.781.9224 E: [info@worldanimalprotection.us](mailto:info@worldanimalprotection.us)

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