



## **CLEAN WATER IS OUR RIGHT!**

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### **Toledo Environmentalists Testify at Van Wert Chicken Factory Hearing** **Additional 2,200,000 chickens planned for NW Ohio**

Environmentalists from Toledo plan to testify at a hearing in Van Wert, June 15, on a proposal to add 2.2 million chickens to the 11.2 million chickens, 292,000 hogs and 97,000 cows already in CAFOs (Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations) in the Western Lake Erie watershed.

Eight members of Advocates for a Clean Lake Erie plan to attend Wednesday's hearing, held by the Ohio Dept. of Agriculture, to state their concern that the manure from the operation will contribute significantly to the nutrient pollution now causing massive blooms of toxic algae in the lake each summer.

In a statement released today, the group called the proposed Pine Valley Ranch CAFO "The latest example of something gone metastatic in our environment and our body politic."

According to OSU Extension figures, the facility will annually add 2,187,810 lbs. of Phosphorus and 2.5 million gallons of manure to the 690 million gallons now produced by the registered CAFOs in the western lake basin.\*

The hearing starts at 7:00 pm, preceded by an open house at 6:30, at the Van Wert County Extension Office, 1055 S. Washington St., in Van Wert.

An ACLE coordinator, Mike Ferner, tied the fate of Toledo area residents and others relying on Lake Erie, to the local residents who would be affected by the operation. "The term 'outsider' has no meaning at this hearing. The imaginary political lines that separate Van Wert County from Toledo mean nothing because we now think in terms of a watershed. We are no more 'outsiders' than the people whose air, water, health and property values have been ruined by these animal factories."

"Those of us living near the lake have seen our property values reduced and our area's economy harmed because people think twice about investing somewhere with the same reputation as the flaming Cuyahoga River and now Flint, Michigan. What happens to the people near this chicken factory effects us in a very real way."

Then he added, “There is a new reality for CAFOs in Northwest Ohio. CAFO construction and regulation will no longer take place inside an irrational, irresponsible system designed to protect the industry from environmental realities, the public interest and even common sense.”

“It’s no longer about just this permit and just this hearing. It’s about a citizenry, a political movement that understands this industry cannot be allowed to pollute our water and endanger our health.

We finally learned that safe levels of lead in paint and gasoline do not exist so we banned them altogether; the same with DDT and with phosphates in detergents – each time over the howls of those who profited. We will do the same with any commercial practice that threatens our life support systems.”

“The regulators and politicians who support animal factory profiteers no longer face just the neighbors who know the dangers and will put this facility under a microscope if it’s built. They face a movement that has awakened to what we should have seen for years; dangers we can no longer ignore.”

In August, 2014 the City of Toledo shut off water for 400,000 people for nearly three days due to high levels of microcystin, a byproduct of the algae that feeds on excess Phosphorus from the manure.

Written public comments on the proposed chicken factory will be accepted until 5pm, June 22.

\* OSU Extension's Bulletin No. 604 at .26/lbs./day for laying hens to calculate fresh manure produced, this means another 210,678,000 lbs. of manure and another (P2O5) each year. However, Pine Valley Ranch's draft permit-to-install estimates only 18,333 tons, or 36,666,000 lbs., of manure will be generated per year.