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I chose to address the issue of CAFOs in Iowa, since the DNR was recently open to public comments on its new regulations. I sent the letter to the state senator and representative that represent my county, as well as the animal feeding operation department within the Department of Natural Resources.

I didn't include my plan to create a grassroots movement in the email, but I think the most efficient way to bring about change would be to start a social media campaign within my college. Most students here aren't from Iowa or the midwest, where most CAFOs are concentrated, so they aren't aware of the problem. Our school has a culture which encourages activism, so I think by raising awareness and educating my peers, I could start a movement. Then we could transition to bigger projects. To create change, this movement has to develop enough public awareness and support that the government has to accept some of the demands to put stronger regulations on CAFOs. A number of organizations have put together a [list of suggestions](#) to improve the DNR's new regulations. The public needs to be aware of where the current new regulations fall short so they can push for the DNR to adopt the joint environmental groups' suggestions. While researching grassroots organizations in Iowa, I came across a number of places where grassroots movements could apply for grants. This could be useful if we wanted to get more awareness by making advertisements that promoted our cause. We could also seek the help of larger environmental organizations who might be able to reach more people, and we could write opinion pieces about the negative effects of CAFOs and send them to local newspapers.

## **Letter**

Hello,

I am a student at Grinnell College. I am writing to ask about your plans to protect Iowa's rural communities from controlled animal feeding operations, or CAFOs.

Many people who don't live in the immediate vicinity of a CAFO aren't aware of the problem. However, as more and more communities are threatened by the expansion of these operations, we have to find ways to protect Iowans while allowing businesses to function. For now, that means holding the health and livelihoods of Iowans over a marginal fraction of profit for industrial agriculture businesses. The toxic algae blooms and nitrogen-polluted drinking water in Iowa are hurting the next generation, and the source known to be these farms.

The DNR's recent draft of rules regarding animal feeding operations fails to sufficiently prevent Iowa's water from being contaminated by waste from CAFOs.

As many groups have called for, we need a moratorium on new CAFOs, at least until there is a solid plan in place to minimize their negative effects.

If it takes a [law](#) to prevent citizens' complaints from shutting down CAFOs, then it's clear where the public's priorities lie. You've heard from the people. You know that they don't want thousands of pigs for neighbors, and you probably don't either. Why listen to a few companies over the people you serve?

Sincerely,  
Corinne Fox



... Caption: I wrote a letter to local representatives and Iowa's department of natural resources for #pgc2022 . It might seem intimidating to contact a politician, but it's their job to represent you and your interests! Call them, email them, or tweet at them to let them know what their constituents think!

Disclaimer: I think all CAFOs should definitely be banned. They are immoral and dangerous. However, when you're talking to politicians, you sometimes have to take baby steps so they actually listen to your points.

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