

Resolution

By The Board Of Commissioners Of Polk County To Protect North Carolina Farmers

WHEREAS, agriculture is one of the most significant drivers of North Carolina's economy, creating tens of billions in economic activity, employing 17 percent of the state's workers and accounting for nearly 20 percent of the state's economy; and

WHEREAS, 26 lawsuits have been filed in North Carolina asserting nuisance allegations against Murphy-Brown, a subsidiary of Smithfield Foods; and

WHEREAS, while the lawsuits name Murphy-Brown as a defendant, most of the farms affected by the lawsuits are independently-owned family farms who, despite operating their farms in a law-abiding manner, stand to lose their livelihoods as a result of the litigation; and

WHEREAS, during the trial phase of a recent case, the jury was denied the ability to conduct a site visit to experience first-hand the conditions complained of and after verdicts were reached, a gag order was entered preventing farmers and their neighbors from publicly discussing the conditions on their farms or the effects of the lawsuits on their farming communities.

WHEREAS, the Polk County Board of Commissioners fear that if this verdict is not overturned, it will set a precedent with far reaching ramifications devastating to North Carolina's agricultural economy, harmful to rural farming communities and will push hardworking family farmers into bankruptcy by stymying their ability to produce fruits and vegetables, raise livestock and seafood, and grow crops and grains.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Polk County Board of Commissioners does hereby support the Swine Farmers of Eastern North Carolina and believe that the agriculture industry is vital to the North Carolina economy and should be protected.