

3/24/2014

Mr. Don Thompson
McDonalds, Inc.
2111 McDonald's Dr.
Oak Brook, IL 60523

*Copies to RB
Benvenuti
Carpenter*

Dear Mr. Thompson:

This letter is about an ongoing ecological controversy in the state of Arkansas involving Cargill Inc., one of your major suppliers. The issue involves one "C&H Hog Farm" which is a "Concentrated Animal Farming Operation" (CAFO). The concern with this particular CAFO is that it was approved to operate on a major tributary six miles upstream of the Buffalo National River. The Buffalo is the nation's first national river and it is operated by the National Park Service. It was so designated as a result of its extraordinary natural beauty and pristine condition. Grass roots organizations within our state fought the Corps of Engineers for more than a decade in the 60s and 70s toward the preservation of this national treasure. This Arkansas resource now draws more than 38 million tourism dollars to our state. I could go on here, but to keep this short, I'll simply include this link provided by the National Park Service for more detail on this pristine resource: <http://www.nps.gov/buff/index.htm>

The C&H Hog Farm CAFO can accommodate up to 6,500 Cargill owned animals. It generates raw effluent that is the rough equivalent of a city of 35,000 people. The untreated waste is to be spread on pastures that are in the flood plain of "Big Creek" a major tributary of the Buffalo. Making matters worse, the underlying geology of this area is "karst". This is a kind of soluble rock which is sieve like and highly permeable. It results in the numerous caves and sinks that are found in the area. As a result, waste material will easily follow the water table into the lowest point, which is our national river. Even supporters of this CAFO admit that the river is likely to be affected.

This is such a "common sense" issue that you might ask how we could have allowed this to happen. It was done quietly by Cargill and the Arkansas Department of Environmental Quality. There were virtually no public notifications. We, the citizens of Arkansas, are working through legal channels to modify the regulatory environment to prevent this from happening again. However, Cargill, the contractor for this facility seems to believe that there is not a problem with the location of this CAFO. Although there has been much discussion on this, Cargill's position has been intransigent. Our viewpoint is that they are not being the good corporate citizen that they would like us all to see them as. How do we get them to view this as a serious issue? We would boycott their products, but frankly they do very little that the retail customer sees directly. Most of their business is supplying large multinationals, of which McDonalds is one. That being the case, and in hopes of hitting Cargill where they live, I will no longer patronize McDonalds until this particular CAFO is closed down or McDonalds discontinues using Cargill as a supplier. I will encourage people in the Buffalo Watershed Alliance, the Ozarks Society, and the Arkansas Canoe club to follow suite. Our hope is that a major Cargill customer with the strong ethics and reputation of McDonalds, can influence one of its suppliers to get on the right side of this very clear-cut issue.

For more information, please see this web site: <http://buffaloriveralliance.org>

My sincere regrets that McDonalds must in any way be affected by the poor behavior of this one bad actor.

Brian A. Thompson
3428 E. Wyman Rd.
Fayetteville, AR. 72701

cc:

Mr. Gregory Page	Cargill
Mr. David W. MacLennan	Cargill
Terest Marks	ADEQ
Mike Beebee	Governor's office