

VICFA | Voice

Our Mission: *To promote and preserve unregulated direct farmer-to-consumer trade that fosters availability of locally grown or home-produced food products*

April 2011

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"Pig Business"

By Susan Verbeeck

On Wednesday, March 9, Lois Smith and I, each with two of our own children, drove into Washington D.C. to view a special screening of a film called "Pig Business". This movie viewing was held at the Capitol Building in the visitor centers theater and was presented by The Center For Food Safety in collaboration with Congressman Dennis Kucinich. "Pig Business" (correlating to "Big Business") was produced by "The Future of Farming" and directed by the Marchioness Tracey Worcester of England.

Tracey is an advocate of the fair treatment of food industry animals and an environmental activist. Also speaking and part of the panel at the screening were Robert F. Kennedy Jr. of "Water Keepers Alliance", Kathy Ozer of "National Family Farm Coalition", Dr. Michael Gregor of the "Humane Society" and Bev Eggleston, owner of EcoFriendly Foods and a protege of Joel Salatin. The theater was filled to standing room only and included members of Congress and their staff, as well as being open free to the general public.

"Pig Business" explores the impact of factory pig farms on the environment, workers, human health, rural communities and animal welfare. The movie tells the story of pork production industrialization as it demonstrates the increasing influence corporations exert over all aspects of people's lives. It shows how governments are looking the other way in regards to illegal procedures going on in the big business of pig farming. Through the film we learn that pork giant, Smithfield Foods Inc., has taken over the small family pork farms throughout the U.S. and Europe and monopolized by taking advantage of cheap labor and poorly enforced environmental laws! In the process, Smithfield is spewing out cheap meat and bankrupting the small farmers. They are endangering human health by over reliance on antibiotics used in the pigs amongst many other crimes of nature! We find out that the only way Smithfield can accomplish their monopoly is by breaking multiple laws and regulations in the industry! In the State of North Carolina, we are told that the politicians are being paid off (through campaign contributions?) to look the other way in regards to these violations.



MARCHIONESS TRACEY WORCESTER,
DIRECTOR OF 'PIG BUSINESS'

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SUSAN, PATRICIA AND MARIELLE
VERBEECK MEET
ROBERT F. KENNEDY JR.

So not only is this “big pig business’ putting small, hard working, by the book family pig farms out of business, it is threatening the health of the local communities, land, air and water! Our trip to D.C. to meet the people involved in this film screening was rewarding and eye opening. We had the pleasure to hear Tracey present the movie. She is well spoken and genteel in demeanor. Robert F. Kennedy Jr. came across as very impassioned and educated on the issues. Everyone we met seemed truly concerned on the subject matter and they all stayed to talk to the audience after the film. Lois and I got to speak with with many of the speakers who listened to some of our views and plights of our experiences in the state of Virginia. Copies of the movie “Pig Business” were distributed for free, along with complimentary copies of the book “CAFO : The Tragedy of Industrial Animal Farms”. Any one interested in seeing the film may view it for free on the Internet. This free distribution will help to inform consumers about the pork they are eating when they buy from Smithfeild.

This event and field trip to D.C. was also very beneficial for our children. It is important for them to see what is going on in the food industry and what they are learning now will make an impact on their future. After seeing the film “Pig Business”, we may never want to intentionally purchase or eat big factory pork again! ■

Susan Verbeeck is a new VICFA member and is the owner of Grow In Grace Farm, in Beaverdam, Va.

To view “Pig Business” online, free of charge, visit:
http://www.pigbusiness.co.uk/the_film/

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Member Profile: Dick Stevens

Dick Stevens has been a VICFA member since 2006 and is a past and present member of the Board of Directors. He was an outspoken critic of the proposed NAIS, that was eventually abandoned, has given many talks on local food issues, and has represented VICFA at many outreach events.

Dick is hosting a poultry workshop at our April VICFA meeting. With this Question/Answer segment, you have an opportunity to get to know more about him:

Where do you live Dick?

I have lived in western Amherst County near the Blue Ridge Mountains for the past 25yrs.

So you're not from here?

Oh no! I grew up near a small town called Plympton in Massachussetts and then moved around Vermont and New Hampshire as my work required.

What was that work?

I worked for an independent phone company for 32 years, and I was asked to come to Virginia to head up a training facility for staff from Maine to Georgia. I retired as the Technical Training Manager.

So what do you do now?

I do a little farming and support locally grown food and real farmers. I have a few beef cattle..when I was a teen I would buy dairy heifer calves, raise them and sell them back to one of the many dairy farms in the area. I also raise poultry.

What type of poultry?

I'm developing 2 breeds which I will talk about at the meeting. I enjoy dealing with the various characteristics and genetics. I have about 60 birds now...I bought my first chicken when I was 10yrs old!

That's a whole lot of poultry experience! What else are you going to talk about at the meeting?

I'm going to talk about the generalities of raising poultry on a small scale..for example using an incubator vs a setting hen, different housing options, and lots more.

What do you do to get away from it all?

I enjoy going to my cabin in Maine where I can go to the local store and buy raw milk! ■

Interview by Anne Buteau.

VICFA Notes

Come to Our April Meeting

The April Meeting will be held in Green Bay, Virginia and **will feature a very special workshop hosted by Dick Stevens.**

Dick is very passionate about educating the younger generation on farming. He believes that our young people hold the key to the future of farming.

Come to our April meeting on April 11, 2011. Make it a family day! Come join us for a potluck supper, our VICFA meeting, special workshop with Dick Stevens, and fellowship!

Join us on April 11, 2011. We will share in a potluck lunch at 1:00 pm, followed by our general business meeting from 2:00 - 4:00 pm. VICFA membership meetings are open to the public. Please bring a dish and a big helping of enthusiasm to share. Broaden our reach - invite a friend or neighbor to join you.

Sunday, April 11, 2011
790 Twin Bridges Road
Green Bay, VA 23942

FROM THE CHARLOTTESVILLE AREA:

From SCOTTSVILLE RD(VA-20), follow VA-20. Turn Right on N JAMES MADISON HWY. Go 1.2 mi. Continue to follow US-15 - go 16.9 mi. Take Left ramp onto PRINCE EDWARD HWY(US-15 S) toward KEYSVILLE/PETERSBURG - go 5.2 mi. Continue on US-460 E - go 3.9 mi. Turn Right on GREEN BAY RD - go 11.2 mi. Turn Left on PATRICK HENRY HWY(US-360 E) - go 0.2 mi. Turn Right on TWIN BRIDGES RD - go 1.1 mi. Arrive at 790 TWIN BRIDGES RD, GREEN BAY, on the right.

FROM THE RICHMOND AREA:

FARMERS MARKET REPORT

Remember: VICFA proudly sponsors the Farmers Market Report each week on V93 (92.9 FM radio, broadcasting from Farmville, VA)

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VICFA

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E-group: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/VICFA>.

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