

Illinois Department of Agriculture approves permit for hog confinement near Lima

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The Illinois Department of Agriculture has approved a permit to allow the construction of a 4,960-head hog confinement facility 1.9 miles southwest of Lima.

D&B Farms LLC, owned by Daron Duke and Brock Brackensick, plan to build a 561-by-71-foot building to house hogs. Waste will be stored underneath the facility and will be used as fertilizer by pumping it through a drag line and injecting it 8 inches into the soil.

"It took a little time, but the state was doing their due diligence, and we're happy to see that we met all the siting requirements (in) the Illinois Livestock Facilities Management Act," said Duke, who added that he plans to house fewer than 2,500 hogs as a compromise with concerned neighbors.

Duke said he hopes to start building the facility this construction season but the wet spring, which has delayed many construction projects in the region, might prevent that.

Supporters and opponents of the hog confinement crammed into the Adams County Boardroom on March 4 for a four-hour state Department of Agriculture hearing on the facility.

Nearby landowners voiced concerns that runoff from the site would reach an adjacent stream. Neighbors were also concerned about the facility's impact property values, local roads and air quality.

The Adams County Board voted 15-4 the week after the hearing to recommend that the Department of Agriculture approve the permit.

Jerry Gallamore, who owns land just southwest of the site, is especially concerned about runoff.

"I'm on a bluff property, and there's a huge drop-off across my property, and when it rains that stuff is going to be running across my property in several places," he said.

Gallamore said a canal that runs at the foot of his property feeds into Bear Creek, which feeds into the Mississippi River.

Duke said he is cutting back on the number of hogs at the facility to 2,480 as a way to help alleviate some of the concerns of neighboring property owners.

"We are trying to be the best neighbors," he said. "We are willing to work with anybody. I think there is a middle ground that we can all meet on."

Gallamore said there is no guarantee that fewer hogs will be housed in the facility.

"The compound building permission from the Department of Agriculture allows for the 5,000 hogs," he said, adding that the state allows for facilities to increase the number of hogs they house.

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