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## **Coalition Encourages Responsible Livestock Farming**

*Educational campaign seeks to enhance the quality of life in Iowa's rural communities*

**DES MOINES, IOWA – Nov. 15, 2006** – A unique multi-media educational campaign titled “Good Neighbors Building Trust” has been launched by the Coalition to Support Iowa’s Farmers (CSIF) to provide farm families with the information they need to responsibly and successfully grow their livestock farms.

The centerpiece of the campaign is a 16-minute DVD and accompanying information packet offering specific insight on exceeding regulations, identifying the best locations for new livestock farms, safeguarding environmental resources and enhancing neighbor relations. The DVD is being distributed this week to nearly 20,000 farmers.

“Efforts by the Coalition to provide families with the tools and resources they need have been extremely successful,” says CSIF Board President Kirk Leeds. “The organization prides itself on meeting face-to-face with families, walking them through regulatory compliance issues and assisting them in identifying the best locations for new farms.”

Leeds, who also serves as Chief Executive Officer for the Iowa Soybean Association, says response to the Coalition’s services has been overwhelming. Nearly 600 families involved in all facets of livestock farming – from the use of open lots and pastures to indoor, climate-controlled barns – have received assistance from the Coalition since its launch in 2004.

The educational campaign and DVD, says Leeds, enhances the organization's ability to reach more families with information vital to growing their livestock farms. Testimonials from farmers and Iowa State University experts highlight the many steps farmers take to care for their families, neighbors and environment. The DVD also promotes rural-urban relations by encouraging farmers and neighbors to discuss expectations and to maintain open communications throughout the planning and construction phases of new livestock farms.

“Strong farms create and sustain strong and vibrant communities,” says CSIF Executive Director Aaron Putze. “Livestock farmers depend on bankers, lenders, small manufacturers, electricians, veterinarians, excavators, construction companies and a host of local businesses to get the job done. Livestock farmers and local communities prosper together when they work together.”

Research conducted by Iowa State University reinforces this shared approach.

“We found that about \$19.5 billion a year leaves this state in the form of livestock and livestock products,” says Iowa State University economist Mark Imerman. “That’s about 10 percent of the \$185 billion in total industrial production in Iowa. That 10 percent does not count what we eat here or consume here; what doesn’t leave the state. Ten percent of any economy is significant.”

The “Good Neighbors Building Trust” campaign continues the Coalition’s efforts to keep farm families on the land and active in their communities.

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“Livestock farming is one of the things we do best in Iowa – it’s who we are,” says Kevin Van Manen, who grows crops and raises livestock with his wife Julie and family near Kellogg. “The Coalition provided us with the information and support we needed to stay on the farm full time. Without the Coalition’s help and the income livestock provides, we would have had to give up part of the farm and pursue some off-farm employment.”

“That would have been extremely difficult because there’s no place we’d rather be than on the farm,” he added. “We wanted to share this message with others and being involved with the DVD was a great opportunity to do just that.”

Key sponsors of “Good Neighbors Building Trust” include Farm Credit Services of America, the Iowa Soybean Association and Latham Hi-Tech Hybrids.

For more information about the Coalition or to request a copy of the DVD, call 1-800-932-2436 or log on to [www.supportfarmers.com](http://www.supportfarmers.com).

### **About Coalition to Support Iowa’s Farmers**

The CSIF was launched May 11, 2004. Its mission is to grow Iowa communities one farmer and one neighbor at a time through the responsible growth of livestock farming. Six prominent farm groups founded and continue to help fund the organization: Iowa Cattlemen’s Association, Iowa Corn Growers Association, Iowa Farm Bureau, Iowa Pork Producers Association, Iowa Poultry Association and Iowa Soybean Association. For more information about the Coalition’s services and the importance of livestock farming in Iowa, log on to [www.supportfarmers.com](http://www.supportfarmers.com).

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