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FFD Mission
Family Farm Defenders is a tax-deductible, non-profit activist organization made up of farmers and concerned consumers. We are seeking ways to bring fair prices back to farmers and to insure a safe and sustainably produced food for consumers.

FFD President's Message
By: Joel Greeno, Kendall, WI
President of Family Farm Defenders (Madison, WI)

This summer we have witnessed a shocking level of violence - the fatal police shootings of Philando Castile in MN and Alton Sterling in LA followed by a sniper killing five officers in Dallas and another gunman killing three more in Baton Rouge, and now a black healthcare worker. These events, being shot by police in North Miami, FL while trying to take care of his autistic patient.

Outside of the U.S., the situation is hardly any better - whether it is the coup attempt and government crackdown in Turkey or the ongoing conflicts in the Middle East. The problem, I think, is that too many people jump to conclusions and don't take the time to just sit down and listen to each other. No one should fall victim to someone else's paranoia or prejudice, and the perpetrators of such violent behavior - whether public servants or private citizens - need to be held accountable for their actions.

One thing we ALL have in common

One thing we ALL have in common - and that could help bring us together in these troubled times - is that we need to eat every day. Those of us who have the privilege of being producers often take for granted that we can just go to the garden or open up the freezer and enjoy something we planted or preserved. Others of us involved in Family Farm Defenders, La Via Campesina, and the National Family Farm Coalition and other like minded groups, know there are answers, too! One of those answers is that we need far more farmers, not less. There are answers, too! One of those answers is that we need far more farmers, not less. There are answers, too! One of those answers is that we need far more farmers, not less. There are answers, too! One of those answers is that we need far more farmers, not less.

Midwest Renewal Energy Fair

I and my daughters, Abigail and Anna Marie, were able to attend the Midwest Renewal Energy Fair for the first time this year from June 17th - 19th inuster, WI. On the way we passed through many old industrial towns like Wisconsin Rapids, Nekoosa, and Stevens Point. We were shocked to see so many brand new offices and shopping centers closed with weeds growing up in their parking lots.

Elected officials, like Wisconsin's own Rep. Paul Ryan, tell us that the problems of America can be fixed, and that we need to be more solution oriented - but what does that mean? Certainly, the folks in Ryan's hometown of Janesville might have something to say about the wisdom of pushing free trade led to the shutting down of their GM auto plant and the loss of hundreds of good middle class unionized jobs. How has the solution to this problem even been thrown away entire communities. And who are those left behind are often reduced to inferior choices where can one get decent groceries anywhere? To get decent groceries anywhere? To get decent groceries anywhere? To get decent groceries anywhere? To get decent groceries anywhere?

It seems like the current system is not really generating real solutions. Are industrial style live stock confinement operations going to feed the poor or help the environment? What about fracking sand mines - are they enriching or destroying our rural communities?

Advance Wind & Solar Energy

At the Energy Fair we discovered amazing advances in wind and solar technology and got to visit a wide array of groups and learn about all sorts of new products. The FFD booth was very busy next to the Wisconsin Network for Peace and Justice (WNJP) and Midwest Action of Mining Alternatives (MAMA). Volunteers from the Wisconsin Farmers Union Camp Kenmore did a great job staffing the kids area, and Abby and Anna Marie enjoyed the hands-on experience of building a cob mud wall - it proved a challenge to hose the mud off the kids afterwards.

FFD vice president Tony Schultz, co-owner of Stoney Acres Farmer with his partner Kat Becker gave a lively performance talk at the Sunday breakfast, doing his own version of a reality TV show with a skit involving a big farmer, a small farmer, and a county extension agent. The whole thing can be watched on YouTube.

Echo Valley Farm Tour

On the 5th of July my daughters and I were able to tour Echo Valley Farm near Ontario, WI (www.echovalley-farmwisconsin.com) and had the opportunity to meet students from Taiwan who were interested in dairy farming. Echo Valley was formed 15 years ago as a place for people to retreat to nature and learn about sustainable agriculture.

Today the farm includes its own bakery that makes pizza and cheese cake, operates its own sawmill for lumber, and hosts a series of cabins, meeting spaces, and amphitheater for use by families and groups.

Being right next door to Wild Cat Mountain State Park, Echo Valley offers a rustic 'Driftless Wisconsin' experience that also fosters cross cultural exchange and solidarity work so we can take better care of one another.

For the kids there were also newly born guinea hens and ducklings to play with, as well as home baked apple butter that barely survived the trip home. The appetite for fresh apple butter that barely survived the trip home. The appetite for fresh apple butter that barely survived the trip home. The appetite for fresh apple butter that barely survived the trip home. The appetite for

producing with dignity, justice, and respect.