

## Family Farm Defenders

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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)



*A gazebo comes down from nearby Veterans Memorial Park*

**A**s many of you know Wisconsin has been hard hit by multiple floods, high winds and tornadoes. There is a path of destruction that crosses the entire state. Some people have lost everything.

**In comparison my own loss was small**, yet it weighs on your confidence and self esteem. My pasture fences are all gone. The storms led to the deaths of some of my animals. My house suffered roof damage that then let torrents of rain pour in. Fertilizer, tools, and equipment washed away. It took me over two hours to make a normal 25 minute trip to work. One of my co-workers said it took them over six hours to get home. The photos of homes, businesses, and communities completely under water are shocking. A small family run restaurant in Ontario, WI where I, my dad, and my two daughters recently ate had water up to the ceilings during the flooding. Infrastructure everywhere is horribly damaged. The road to my own house is caving in now two weeks later - the gravel underneath is no longer there. Heavy farm equipment would have surely caved it in.

**And, now with Hurricane Florence hitting the Carolinas**, Wisconsin seems forgotten. People feel helpless - where do they turn? Will FEMA come? Mostly it has been every day folks that have stepped up to clean up and get people on track. Will politicians finally realize that climate change makes such disasters worse? Answers are few and broken hearts are many. Keep Wisconsin in your thoughts and prayers as we struggle to recover and be ready to offer solidarity to those hurt in the Carolinas, too.

**We as Family Farm Defenders are at a crossroads with many paths to choose.** On one path some of our founders and longtime leaders are drifting away for many reasons. We dearly miss their presence and love and respect their many years of service. Yet people continue to step up. Some veteran activists and many new faces continue to appear, taking on the challenges that lie before us.

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*Neighbors Sandbagging*

*To protect homes from the flooding storm water*

**We also rely on our members to bring issues to the table** and often these issues they have had to address themselves. The personal can be quite political. At this crossroad we are continually challenged with taking the course of "business as usual" or opting for a new path to bring about real social change. This becomes tricky when dealing with issues that have been around for decades and tackling issues that are brand new - issues like the price of milk or the corporate take over of organics or the impact of dicamba.

**I believe our shining star at Family Farm Defenders** is our sense of what is Good, Right and Just - guided by The Seven Principles of Food Sovereignty. This includes such

ideas as access to land, fair wages, being able to be GMO free, and participatory democracy. FFD founder, John Kinsman, would often remark that elections could be corrupt even down to the level of school boards. People seem to crave the power of being in control - even when it not in their best interest.

**So we as Family Farm Defenders have our work cut out for us.**

How do we effectively create meaningful change? How do we accomplish the work that leads to improvement in the condition of our world? The answer lies at the crossroad where people and issues merge to build relationships. The paths we choose leading us out of our current situation will depend upon the suc-



*Albany EMS*

*Helps a Cow Flood Survivor*

cess of our fellow peoples. As a small grassroots group with seemingly few victories in the grand scheme of things, we still maintain our optimism. This is possible because we have what is Good, Just and Right on our side.

**As we gather under the banner of Family Farm Defenders one path is clear** - we must protect our farmers, ranchers, farm workers, fisher people, and consumers!

Can we count on you to help us in this task, to defend and protect the land that feeds us and nourishes us each and every day? If you believe in what is Good, Just and Right, you will! Let's join at this crossroad and march on to victory over those that have taken so much away from us.