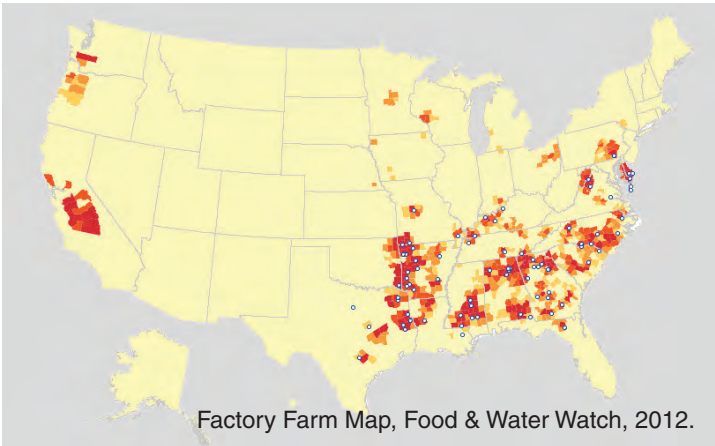


Fowl Matters

A Guide to Health, Environmental Justice and Civic Action around Broiler Chicken

Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs) raise and feed a range of animals in confined situations. Cows, hogs, chickens, turkey and other animals do not graze on pastures. Their manure is heavily concentrated in lagoons or sprayed on crop fields. The USDA defines broiler CAFOs as annually raising and slaughtering 500,000 or more chickens for meat consumption.

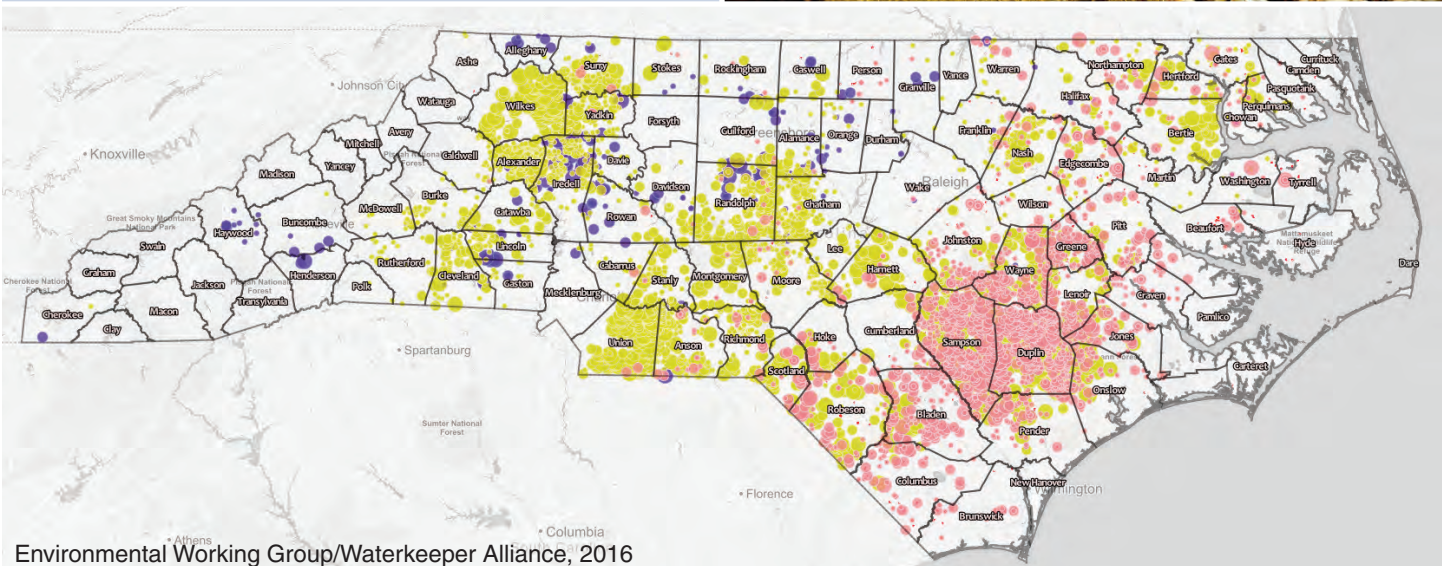


Factory Farm Map, Food & Water Watch, 2012.

How did Big Ag come about?

Modern-day CAFOs were created through a system of **subsidies, deregulation, and vertical integration**. In 2015, the U.S. produced 9 billion broilers. Today, 97 percent of the chicken we eat is produced by 30,000 farmers under contract with Tyson, Pilgrim's Pride, Perdue and Sanderson Farms.

Broiler CAFOs are concentrated in what is known as the **southeast poultry corridor**. Poultry farming is now the number one agricultural operation in North Carolina and in 2014 had an economic impact of \$12.8 billion. The green dots below show the spatial distribution of poultry operations in NC.



Environmental Working Group/Waterkeeper Alliance, 2016

Poultry Ills & Ongoing Actions

Visit the [Rachel Carson Council's](http://www.rachelcarsoncouncil.org) website for updated actions on these issue areas: www.rachelcarsoncouncil.org/take-action

Clean Water



Waste and fertilizer runoff from poultry operations enter rivers, lakes, and streams. **Nitrogen and phosphorus pollution** causes algal blooms, kills fish, and pollutes drinking water. Consuming this water can cause **birth defects, bladder diseases**, and **thyroid problems**.

Support the **North Carolina Environmental Justice Network** and Waterkeeper Alliance's campaigns to clean up poultry operations.

Clean Air



Communities living near broiler CAFOs are exposed to **ammonia, particulate matter, and heavy metals** when large fans aerate confined waste. Breathing in polluted air can cause respiratory diseases, asthma, and lung cancer.

Support the **Community Healthy Air Act**, being pushed by a coalition of community leaders on the lower Eastern Shore of Maryland.

Fair Labor



Contract growers sign unfair contracts and spend vast sums to convert their farms into factories. They often become saddled with debt. **Workers** suffer from extreme heat, job insecurity, and exposure to other occupational hazards.

Support efforts by the **Rural Advancement Foundation International** and **Western North Carolina Workers' Center**.

Save Antibiotics



Poultry CAFOs are breeding grounds for **antibiotic resistance**, which develops when drugs are used for non-therapeutic purposes. When consumers buy contaminated food at grocery stores, pathways of exposure multiply and can decrease the drugs' effectiveness for all human patients.

Join the **Save Antibiotics Campaign** through Food & Water Watch. Support research by **Rural Empowerment Association for Community Help**.

Climate Justice



Poultry litter incinerators release more **carbon monoxide, particulate matter, nitrogen oxide, and carbon dioxide than new coal plants**. Poultry production and incineration facilities are often disproportionately sited in low-income areas and/or in communities of color.

Support **research and action** conducted by Johns Hopkins' Center for a Livable Future.

Animal Welfare



Chickens are crammed into feeding operations for 20 weeks, and engineered to grow so quickly that their bodies cannot support their weight. The poultry industry is largely ignored in the **Humane Methods for Livestock Slaughter Act**, resulting in chickens being boiled alive.

Sign up for the ASPCA's **Shop With Your Heart** initiative which encourages consumers to buy animal-welfare certified products.

Defend Research Integrity



To successfully bring about social, environmental, economic, and political change, it is essential to equip coalitions in higher education with research and **advocacy skills**, and for them to act **without fear of repercussions**.

Join the **Rachel Carson Council's** campaign to expose intimidation and protect researchers, advocates, and community members.

End Ag Gag



Ag Gag laws silence insider revelations, including conditions inside CAFOs, environmental harms, food safety breaches, and labor violations. They evolved from **Right-to-Farm Amendments** and criminalize free speech.

Support the **Food Integrity Campaign's** efforts to protect whistleblowers and advance free speech.