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Livestock Confinement operations in this state already have to submit manure (nutrient) management plans and report and pay water usage. I know this for a fact; I am a hog farmer in Southern Minnesota. (And, I grew up a dairy farmer's daughter milking 60-200 cows in a stanchion barn over the course of my childhood.) There is no environmental reason this dairy cannot expand. And to quote a man speculating that this entity HAS to be polluting based on the sheer amount of manure they handle— is utterly pathetic journalism and a social injustice in itself. Go do your homework. Commercial fertilizer prices are record high. There is no incentive whatsoever for farmers to over-apply manure. Furthermore, it is tested for nutrient value and then applied at precision rates with GPS technology.

In a free market economy, EVERY size of business has a place to exist and offer to consumers a flourishing choice of product—provided each entity can operate at a profit for himself. EVERY size of farm offers a market and competition for local agricultural products—corn, soybeans, alfalfa, oat straw, JOBS, equipment repair, etc. etc. The value to the local economy is incalculable.

Smaller dairies can now enter direct to consumer markets and small scale coops to receive a premium price for their products.

Large scale dairies like this one can meet increasing dairy demand to large scale markets like Costco and Walmart.

Why on Earth would we want to cripple our free market choice with regulation and environmental tax? This state is already one of the WORST STATES of our nation for operating a business—horribly over regulated and micromanaged by the state with nothing to show for it but billions of dollars of fraud. DO NOT encourage any additional study — what a waste of money. Stop crippling agriculture in this state with bureaucracy.

Use common sense. Allow expansion. Allow the free market to work. A next time, do your homework before you write a piece on confinement ag.