



Coalition to Support Iowa's Farmers

Growing communities one farmer - and one neighbor - at a time

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Location Location Location

Identifying the best location for a new livestock enterprise is the first step to growing a farm responsibly and successfully. With nearly 90 percent of Iowa's land area devoted to food production, there are plenty of good places to build. There are some good locations, too. Keep these things in mind when choosing a site for your new livestock building.

Site Considerations

- Size of barn and storage building structure.
- Available land for activities or livestock.
- Distance to surface water or wells.
- East (rock) terrain or alluvial (flood) soils.
- Determine distance to neighbors.
- Prevailing summer winds, typically from south and west.
- Proximity of roads, bridges, lakes, streams, wetlands and other public use areas.
- Opportunities for future growth at site.



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Feedyards & Backyards

A twice-monthly column focusing on issues important to livestock farming and Iowa. [Click here](#)

From the Field

"I'm pleased that we have the Coalition to Support Iowa's Farmers, especially in siting. The Coalition is providing leadership in aiding livestock farmers and progressive communities."

Paul Lasley, Iowa State University Sociologist, Nov. 21, 2005 Speaking before the Iowa Environmental Protection Committee

Past Quotes

Being a Good Neighbor

The Coalition to Support Iowa's Farmers knows that it takes two to be a good neighbor. That is why the Coalition developed and supports a Good Neighbor Statement. [Learn more...](#)

Strategic Technical
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Top News

Livestock critical to community growth, prosperity

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CSIF Exclusive News -- Fourth in a Series

(Editor's note -- The Coalition to Support Iowa's Farmers recently visited with Adair County farmers, residents and community leaders about the benefits of agriculture and the positive impact of responsibly growing area livestock farms. Throughout March and April, the Coalition will unveil a series of articles focusing on the interconnection between strong and growing farms and vibrant and prosperous main streets in Adair County...and beyond.)

(ADAIR, IA -- April 2, 2007) – There aren't many places around Adair where you'll find a parking lot filled with vehicles featuring license plates from Adair, Audubon, Greene, Linn, Webster and Cass Counties. Yet it's a common occurrence when you make a visit to Agri Drain Corporation.

The company's headquarters is located just a few drainage pipes north of Adair in rural Guthrie County. Its president is Charlie Schafer, an energetic entrepreneur whose passion is helping farmers enhance productivity while improving water and soil quality.

"What can I say – I get excited about protecting our natural resources and helping farmers make better use of the land and their resources," says Schafer, a west central Iowa native who grew up on a 160-acre farm north of Adair.

The successful business had humble beginnings. Schafer and two brothers founded Agri Drain in 1976. In its early days, the company employed two people and supplied farmers with subsurface drainage materials and installation. In 2001, Schafer acquired sole ownership of the company.

Today, Agri Drain is celebrating 30 years of service and features America's most complete selection of water management products. It manufactures and distributes a wide array of products that help landowners better manage water transport. One of its signature products is the inline water level control structure. The simple yet ingenious product reduces the departure of subsoil moisture from farmland. In doing so, the product enhances stream and river water quality while improving soil moisture levels, a tremendous benefit for crops when weather conditions turn dry.

"We help provide a workable solution to many critical issues including water quality, retention, usage and availability," Schafer said. "These are issues that are coming to the forefront of agriculture. We believe we're in a unique position to help and benefit the farm community and the environment."

So, too, are area livestock farmers and all those who produce food.

"Some people believe Iowa is a town while others look at it as a farm. I look at it as a farm," said Schafer. "How a person looks at Iowa and how its resources should be used makes a big difference when it comes to garnering

Resource available online

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support for adding more livestock to our farms.”

Schafer said it's critical that farmers, including those who raise livestock, have an opportunity to grow. This is especially true for Adair County which ranks near the bottom in a statewide review of livestock numbers and market value.

“You look at the state's gross domestic product and its foundation is agriculture,” said Schafer. “Sometimes people focus on its cities and towns as where our economic development should come from. That's because people aren't always interacting with farmers. When you don't visit with farmers or know what they do or the value of what they do, it's easy to forget just how important the farm is to our economy and quality of life.”

Schafer said communities in and around Adair and Guthrie County are good places to raise livestock and great places to live. He says Agri Drain's home is Adair.

“This is home. This is where I grew up. We're fortunate to do business all across the country. We know the people we sell to and we have high quality people who are Agri Drain employees. They know what they're doing, they're hard working and they're dedicated.

“In many ways,” added Schafer, “our employees are just like farmers because they care about what they do. That's what makes our business and our communities so successful.”

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