

Students address CAFO concerns

BY CAITLIN DEAN
Staff Reporter

A small but passionate group of Truman students is taking action to bring attention to the negative effects of Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations.

Graduate student Cassie Phillips, who teaches an Introduction to Environmental Studies class, said 10 students in her class decided to work on a service learning project rather than completing traditional term papers.

"Students could have done an individual project, but the way they opted to go was to use the course material that we had been focusing on, using a local issue to understand and process larger environmental issues," Phillips said.

Sophomore Ashley May said the CAFO service learning group has been working on this project since about Midterm Break. In addition to distributing a pamphlet, the group set up a table in the Student Union Building from Tuesday through Thursday to raise awareness.

The project culminates with a panel discussion tonight that includes guest speakers state Rep. Rebecca McClanahan, D-Kirksville, John Ikerd, agricultural economist and author, community activist Terry Spence and a Linn County commissioner representative. The panel discussion will take place tonight in Pershing Building 325.

The Center for Teaching and Learning was one of the sources of funding for the project.

"I didn't want to fully rely on those funds," Phillips said. "I think it's very important to bring other stakeholders into the mix, so we also got funding from the Agricultural Science department, the Biology department, the Environmental Studies department and the Provost office."

May said she is concerned about more than just the physical and biological effects of CAFOs on communities after working on the project.

"It's incredibly negatively affecting [the] socioeconomic of the communities in which these CAFOs exist," she said. "All these promises that are made when a CAFO is going to come to the community, it's almost assumed like, 'OK, we're going to have a CAFO now. It's going to increase our tax base. It's going to create more jobs.' But, in fact, it does the opposite."

The service learning group hopes to make connections with the outside community to help future classes and to begin raising awareness on campus, May said.

Junior Torin Brenner said he didn't even know what a CAFO was until two months ago but that his involvement in the project has changed his own habits.

"I've... started eating a lot less meat, to the point where I don't eat meat in the dining halls anymore," he said.

Brenner said the group considered trying to change where meat for the campus dining halls is purchased, but that idea has been put on hold.

"It's not anything that we're just forgetting about, but other parts of



Brian O'Shaughnessy/Index
Senior Eric Ewing, freshman Ali Helmig and junior Dan Fister (left to right) speak with senior Graeme Allen, who is inquiring Tuesday afternoon about Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations. Ewing, Helmig and Fister are members of an Introduction to Environmental Studies course and as a class project, decided to compile and share information with students about CAFOs.

the project took precedence, so it kind of got pushed aside for right now," he said.

Students think this project has achieved its biggest aim.

"The goal of a service learning project in general is to educate others while educating yourself," sophomore Jamie Barbaglia said. "So we're doing a hands-on activity in order to help others become interested while at the same time learning ourselves."

The local issue on which students chose to focus is "the effects of 'cheap meat' on the environment, local community, and workers," according to the pamphlet the CAFO service learning group designed and distributed.

Barbaglia said the idea to create a project focused on CAFOs came from a class speaker, Macon resident Pam Stokes. Stokes has experienced the effects of CAFOs firsthand because one was built near her home.

"The community members try to stop them from coming in, but they have so much power because they're so wealthy and have so much money," Barbaglia said. "It's basically impossible for a small community like Macon or La Plata not to let CAFOs come in."

Stokes also encouraged students in the class to attend a meeting of the group Citizens Against Polluting Environment, Barbaglia said.

Knox County police issue warrant for horse rescue

BY JOHN FLEMING
Staff Reporter

Fifteen horses recently were removed under suspicion of animal negligence from property located in Knox County.

The horses, whose condition had been monitored since April, were rescued the morning of Nov. 8 about one mile south of Highway 6 and just southwest of Hurdland, Mo., about 17 miles from Kirksville.

The Knox County Sheriff's Office issued a warrant to inspect, care for and impound the animals in conjunction with the rescue. The decision to remove the horses was made by the sheriff's office and an on-location veterinarian.

Among the 15 horses was a stallion and several mares and foals that appeared to be in poor condition upon rescue, according to a press release issued by the Humane Society of Missouri.

The Humane Society of Missouri is waiting for more information before pursuing legal action.

"The Humane Society of Missouri is awaiting the reports of two veterinarians: the on-site veterinarian the day of the impound as well as from the veterinarian that examined [the horses] upon receipt at the Longmeadow Rescue Ranch," said Carmen Skelly, statewide investigator for the Humane Society of Missouri.

The horses arrived at Longmeadow Rescue Ranch in the afternoon on Nov. 8, said Jeane Jae, director of communications for the Humane Society of Missouri.

Workers at the Union, Mo., ranch, which is a 165-acre refuge for abused and neglected horses, cows, goats, pigs, ducks and other farm animals, will care for the horses until the morning of

Dec. 4, when the general disposition of the horses will be determined before the Knox County Associate Circuit Court.

"The owner or custodian continued to knowingly fail to provide adequate care or control."

Carmen Skelly
Statewide Investigator for the Humane Society of Missouri

The Humane Society of Missouri became aware of the case April 27 through formal complaints from concerned local citizens and other Missouri agencies.

Two Rescues and Investigations correction notices had been left with

the owner, but Skelly said the neglect of the 15 horses did not stop.

"The owner or custodian continued to knowingly fail to provide adequate care or control," Skelly said.

The threat of further animal neglect only will increase as winter approaches, Skelly said.

"Winter provisions for horses and farm animals should already be in place and easily accessible throughout the winter months," Skelly said.

Skelly said she fears it will be nearly impossible to counter all of the threats to horses that live on farms throughout the state of Missouri.

"There are not enough

equine rescues to take on and care for the current overpopulation of unwanted equines," Skelly said.

Skelly said she thinks horse owners should become proactive in combating horse abuse and to maintain a reasonable population of horses.

"Responsible breeding has to become a major priority of all horse owners," Skelly said. "Until then, adoption of rescued and rehabilitated horses helps ensure space will be available for the next ones placed in peril by an owner or custodian who cannot or will not provide appropriate and adequate food, clean water, shelter and continuing health care."

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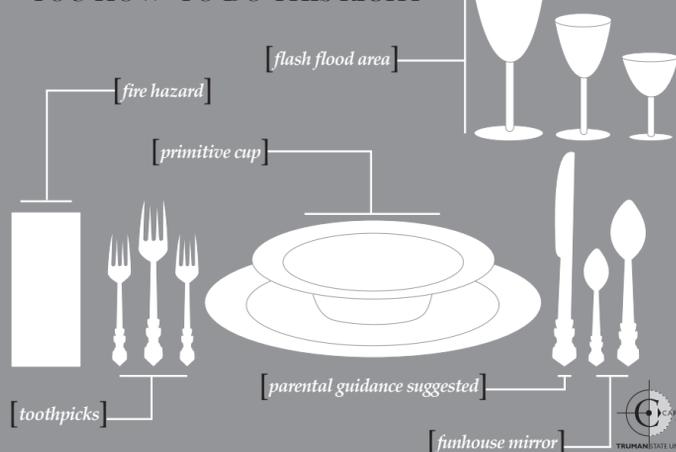
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