



## **MEA Clients Announce Legal Settlement Requiring Kewaunee County Livestock Facility to Stop Spreading Liquid Manure on Agricultural Land**

*Neighbors of Kinnard Farms, Inc. Negotiate Agreement to Address Drinking Water Pollution*

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**Madison, WI**— Today, six Kewaunee County residents represented by Midwest Environmental Advocates (MEA) announced they have reached a [settlement](#) with Kinnard Farms, Inc. (KFI)—one of the state’s largest concentrated animal feeding operations (CAFOs)—and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) in a legal dispute over KFI’s [wastewater permit](#). Clean Wisconsin joined MEA and KFI’s neighbors in negotiating the agreement.

The settlement is the latest development in more than [a decade of legal proceedings](#), during which neighbors of Kinnard Farms, Inc. have continued to fight for their right to clean water.

According to the terms of the recent settlement, KFI has agreed to withdraw a [legal challenge](#) opposing permit conditions imposed by the DNR last year following [a 2021 landmark Wisconsin Supreme Court victory](#). The Supreme Court’s decision affirmed the DNR’s authority to protect water resources by requiring groundwater monitoring and setting a limit on the number of animals allowed under a CAFO permit.

The settlement announced today requires Kinnard Farms, Inc. to install manure processing technology developed by Sedron Technologies. When operational, the technology promises to eliminate Kinnard Farms’ use of liquid manure on agricultural fields. While the neighbors are hopeful the manure processing technology will function as intended, they say they aren’t willing to simply take KFI’s word for it.

“Due to the relatively new nature of the technology, as well as this CAFO’s [history of compliance violations](#), our clients insisted that a clear timeline and strong provisions for ensuring transparency and accountability be incorporated into the final settlement,” said **MEA Staff Attorney Adam Voskuil**.

If KFI fails to meet the deadlines it has agreed to, it must immediately begin monitoring groundwater quality—a requirement of its 2022 permit—and reporting the results to its neighbors and to the DNR.

The homes of the six Kewaunee County residents involved in the settlement are located near or adjacent to farmland where Kinnard Farms Inc. spreads manure. The neighbors got involved in this case

because they are deeply concerned about the impact of KFI's waste management practices on the health of their families, their drinking water and the area's lakes, rivers and streams.

**Jodi Parins, a neighbor involved in negotiating the settlement**, said, "Our fight for clean drinking water stretches back more than a decade and has involved many ordinary yet dedicated people, including more than a few who are no longer with us. This is a deeply personal issue for many of us. This settlement and the potential of Sedron's Varcor technology will allow us to get on with our lives and, hopefully, stop being afraid of drinking our water."

The agricultural fields used by KFI for spreading manure are located in an area that is highly susceptible to groundwater contamination. The groundwater beneath the area is in a fractured carbonate bedrock aquifer—a type of karst geology characterized by shallow soils over fractured bedrock that allows contaminants at the surface to travel rapidly into and through groundwater.

As industrial dairies like Kinnard Farms Inc. have grown larger and become more prevalent, local residents have seen the quality of their drinking water deteriorate. A [2022 report](#) concluded there is simply not enough agricultural land in Kewaunee and Door Counties to safely dispose of all the liquid manure CAFOs produce. The report found that in some areas, nitrogen from manure and fertilizer is applied at more than 50 percent above the rates recommended by University of Wisconsin scientists to minimize pollution.

"Reaching this settlement allows us to move forward in our work to advocate for increased accountability and oversight of large livestock operations," said **MEA Senior Staff Attorney Dan Gustafson**. "MEA's participation in this case continues to focus attention on the public health risks associated with the expansion of industrial dairy operations in areas that are highly susceptible to groundwater and surface water pollution."

**Midwest Environmental Advocates** is a nonprofit law center that combines the power of law with the resolve of communities facing environmental injustice to secure and protect the rights of all people to healthy water, land, and air. Learn more at [www.midwestadvocates.org](http://www.midwestadvocates.org) or [www.facebook.com/midwestadvocates](https://www.facebook.com/midwestadvocates).

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