



## **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

- **How many nuisance lawsuits were filed involving NC farms?**

A total of 26 nuisance lawsuits were filed against Smithfield Foods/Murphy Brown by 500+ neighbors in eastern North Carolina. The first lawsuit was filed in 2014, and the first court case was tried in 2018. All of the lawsuits were settled in 2020.

- **What was the outcome of the other lawsuits?**

A total of five lawsuits were heard by juries in U.S. District Court in Raleigh, NC — and the plaintiffs prevailed in each case. The jury awarded the plaintiffs a total of \$549 million (later reduced to ~\$99 million due to a North Carolina cap on punitive damages). A confidential settlement of all cases was announced in November 2020.

- **What is Joey Carter doing now?**

The hogs never returned to Joey's farm in Beulaville, NC. Today, Joey and his family has started raising cows to supplement their farm income. He recently tore down the hog houses he built by hand so he wouldn't have to pay property taxes on the structures. Meanwhile, Joey continues serving neighbors as chief of the Beulaville fire department.

- **What type of settlement was reached?**

Smithfield announced in November 2020 that it had reached a confidential settlement covering all 26 lawsuits. No dollar amounts were disclosed.

- **Has North Carolina strengthened its Right to Farm laws?**

Yes, the North Carolina legislature strengthened the state's Right to Farm laws in 2017 and 2018. The Farm Act of 2017 limits damages in nuisance lawsuits to the fair market value of a plaintiff's property. The Farm Act of 2018 limits when neighbors can file a nuisance lawsuit against a farm — the neighbor must live within a half-mile of the farm and must file a lawsuit within a year of when the farm begins operations. It prevents lawsuits from being filed against farms that have not been cited for civil or criminal penalties and prevents plaintiffs from recovering punitive damages. Challenges to the law have been upheld by the courts.

- **Are North Carolina hog farmers still facing challenges?**

Yes. To get around restrictions on nuisance lawsuits, a new legal challenge alleges that odors from neighboring farms are "trespassing" on their property. The cases have yet to go to trial. In addition, a Title VI complaint has been filed with the EPA, alleging that permits issued to NC hog farms discriminate against minority communities. The NC Department of Environmental Quality has refuted the claims.

- **Who was responsible for making this documentary?**

The documentary was independently produced and directed by Jason Arthurs and Well Raised Productions over a three-year period. Jason is an award-winning filmmaker who previously worked as a photojournalist for two of North Carolina's largest newspapers.