

COACT'S FARM CAMPAIGN AND VICTORIES

1981: COACT convenes meeting in Little Falls of family farmers from throughout the state to address FmHA loan denials and other injustices. **This inaugurates COACT as a farm activist organization.**

Early to mid-1980s: Minnesota senate passes minimum price bill for sustainable commodity prices paid to farmers. Fails in the house.

January 1984: COACT sponsors National Family Farm Crisis Conference where Jim Hightower, Texas Commissioner of Agriculture, gives keynote address.

August 1984: 100 COACT farmers and other members confront the First Bank of Paynesville in central Minnesota to protest the unwarranted calling in of the Kohnen family's dairy farm operating loan.

Winter 1984-85: COACT becomes one of the lead organizations of the Groundswell farm movement when 17,000 farmers rally on the state capitol steps that February to protest foreclosures. Groundswell inspired by COACT's First Bank action.

1985-86: With the help of COACT in the Groundswell farm movement, state legislature passes a moratorium on farm foreclosures with the right of mediation and debt restructuring.

Late 1980s: COACT organizes "milk giveaways" at food shelves in St. Cloud and South Minneapolis where dairy farmers give milk away to dramatize the low prices they're paid.

November 1988: COACT farmers and consumers gather at the University of Minnesota's dairy research barn to protest synthetic Bovine Growth Hormone (rBGH) research.

1992: COACT farmers organize Minnesota's participation in the "Dump the National Dairy Board Campaign".

1993: COACT farmers provide leadership in the passage of a state minimum milk pricing law.

1994: COACT gets a state labeling and certification law passed for rBGH-free dairy products.

1996: COACT wins legislation creating the Minnesota Dairy Producers Board which has dairy farmers and consumers together monitoring unfair processor milk pricing practices.

1995-99: COACT works with farm, environment, and faith organizations to save Minnesota's Anti-Corporate Farm Law from being weakened by factory feedlot interests, to save the right of local control in feedlot permitting, to stop limited liability for factory feedlots, and to get state legislation to control toxic hydrogen sulfide emissions from factory feedlots.

COACT organizes citizens to use their right of local control against the permitting of hazardous factory feedlots in central Minnesota, and helps win six month moratorium on feedlot permitting in Morrison County.

1999-2000: COACT works with the Minnesota Dairy Producers Board to expose the unfairly high volume premiums paid to large-scale dairy operators by co-op processors at the expense of the rest of the farmers. Average-size and small farms get a few thousand dollars annually compared to \$125,000 to \$500,000 paid to the large-scale operators. Without these high volume premiums, the large-scale operations of 1,000 cows or more would go out of business because they're less financially efficient than the average-size operation of 63 cows, according to the state's Farm Business Management Education Program. This reveals that instead of expanding to stay in business, all that farmers need is a fair price for their milk.

2001- 2003: COACT works with Milk Power dairy farmers for passage of the Milk Power bill to establish a fair state milk pricing system for farmers with supply management and a sustainable floor price. It passed the Senate, but awaited further hearings in the House.

2003 – Present: COACT is working in the Citizens Task Force For Livestock Farmers and Rural Communities (comprised of the Land Stewardship Project, Minnesota Farmers Union, League of Women Voters, Sustainable Farming Association of Minnesota, and other groups) to save local control for township and county government to permit feedlots which corporate livestock interests are trying to remove by changing state law and the state's judicial system.

2006: COACT is organizing community support for an amendment to the State Constitution to keep the power of eminent domain at its original intent in the U.S. Constitution, which is that it can only be used for the public good and not the private economic gain of corporate developers.