

My brother and I at Rosewood Pork were very surprised and disappointed to learn of these allegations in the Vox article. The pictures indicate careless animal husbandry practices that violate acceptable animal care protocols, the very protocols that our family has carefully followed during a lifetime of animal care. What we saw in the pictures is not OK, and we took immediate steps to learn why this had occurred.

It is important to note that these barns had been leased to another family farm operation several years ago, and were managed by them in April of 2019. At the time that this undercover investigation took place, Rosewood had no role in the management of the barns, had no ownership of the pigs, and had no employees who worked there.

Immediately after learning of the allegations we began an investigation by visiting with the key people in their family, and we received information from the veterinarian responsible for reviewing the health protocols of pigs in these barns. Veterinary and farm records tell us the pigs in question were sick from an infectious respiratory illness that poses no threat to humans, but exhibits a number of unpleasant symptoms in pigs, including death. The pigs were being treated for this health threat at the time of the investigation. Further, we confirmed that the tenants had appropriate animal care protocols and they had trained their employees appropriately. But clearly, those protocols had not been carefully followed at the time in question.

Some time ago, before we had learned of these claims from the undercover investigators, Rosewood had taken steps to again take over the day-to-day management of our barns for a number of reasons, including our own concerns about day to day management. The current barn caretaker has been thoroughly trained in proper animal care protocols and our expectations, and is under direct supervision of Rosewood.

Of course, we were disappointed to see the condition of some of the pigs shown in the photos. We are thankful that there is no evidence of animal abuse, neglect or mistreatment of any kind. But perhaps more disappointing is that the undercover investigators took these photos more than nine months ago, but had never notified us or a third party of what they had observed. Had they done so, we could have made immediate changes much sooner.

A narrative from Direct Action Everywhere accompanied the photos, and described the environment in the barns. That narrative is demonstrably false.

Modern livestock facilities, including these, are designed to provide the best possible environment for the animals in them. Our pig buildings are bright, well-ventilated and temperature controlled to keep pigs consistently comfortable around the clock, 365 days a year. They always have ample space, fresh feed and clean water all day, every day. In the heat of the summer pigs are fogged with a fine mist to help keep them cool, and pigs love it! In our barns the pigs are not confined to pens; rather, they have a lot of space to eat, sleep and play. They have food courts and loafing space.

Then there is the matter of the undercover investigation itself. While the pictures don't show evidence of any laws being broken with respect to animal care, clearly the "investigators" broke trespassing laws. Of far greater concern, we livestock producers and the state of Iowa take the matter of biosecurity very, very seriously. Sickness in livestock, as it is with humans, is something to be avoided if at all possible. We are very much concerned about foreign animal diseases (FADs).

The world is currently anxiously watching the outbreak and spread of the corona virus. The same is true of our livestock. The state of Iowa dedicates a great deal of care, and expense, to monitor and test in order

to stay vigilant with respect to disease, especially FADs. The intruders violated many biosecurity protocols, and potentially contributed to the spread of disease. This type of dangerous, illegal activity cannot be condoned.

Our family has a long tradition of responsible crop and pig production. We were taught to take care of the land and the animals because it's the right thing to do. We know that success in agriculture depends on attention to detail because crops and animals thrive in a healthy environment and they suffer in a poor environment. Industry standards such as Pork Quality Assurance Plus (PQA+) are not a burden for us; rather, they are minimum thresholds. In addition, as a family, we are acutely aware of the moral and ethical responsibilities that come with the care of animals. Doing the right thing every day is essential. It's called integrity, and we value that very highly. That's why these allegations by Direct Action Everywhere are so disappointing to us!

Going forward, we will continue to monitor the changes we had already made to make sure pigs under our care are well cared for to prevent future incidents of this type.