

Airborne Emissions and Human Health

No evidence showing a direct impact of airborne emissions from animal operations on human health has yet been found, *but* quality-of-life factors for those living near animal facilities have been documented. Another study in Iowa (Thu et al. 1997) found a higher frequency of mainly respiratory health symptoms in people living within 2 miles of a 4,000-head hog operation compared to a control group in an area with no intensive livestock operations. A different North Carolina study (Wing and Wolf 1999) found similar results when surveying residents of three rural communities: one a nonlivestock area, another with cattle (about 300 dairy cows) operations, and a final area that contained a 6,000-head hog unit. Certain respiratory and gastrointestinal health symptoms (runny nose, sore throat, excessive coughing, and diarrhea) were reported more often in the communities located near livestock (mostly hog) facilities. Also quality-of-life factors like not wanting to open windows or going outside during pleasant weather were similar in the control (non-livestock) and cattle areas but much lower for residents living in the community near the hog operation. Finally, many individuals and/or grassroots organizations claim negative effects have occurred due to odor and other airborne emissions from livestock and poultry operations (Hudson 1998).

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Airborne Emissions from Animal Production Systems