

Has the American Dream Turned Into a Nightmare?



An Open Letter to American Ag | By Glen Moeller, Retired Farmer & Iowa Landowner

I retired from active farming after 41 years including 37 years raising hogs. I knew when I was 4 years old that to be a farmer was for me. I viewed through our living room window a new tractor being unloaded for my Dad. The machine was much larger and the paint much brighter than the tractor they were hauling away. I didn't realize at the time how hard my Dad had worked for that day.

This was a page in a saga of the American Dream. The American Dream that all farmer's have in American Agriculture. Certainly it's not just the purchase of a machine, but the constant drive to do more and do it better. The Pride of accomplishing the American Dream. The pride in knowing that because of their dream they are feeding multitudes of people, not just in the U.S. but all over the world.

Today the stories of mass euthanizing of livestock, the food that ultimately was to feed the world are being heard all over our country. The gassing of poultry, the rotting produce the

entire length of our country. The links in our food chain that may take years to repair. There is nothing more demoralizing than a producer that has to destroy a crop or an animal they took so much pride in producing. And this is not to mention the livelihood for they and their family. It breaks my heart.

And then we have a marketplace which is no longer a market. No longer a reliable indicator of supply and demand. Sometimes it appears to be no more than an algorithm. Could this be part of a nightmare?

But, recently I drove across the state of Iowa. I saw a checkerboard of fields planted in soybeans and corn. Each field, for miles, neatly planted right up to the fence line or easement. Almost all the fields were identical in the preparation and condition. The residue from last years crop was placed exactly where it needed to be and the waterways ran through the field like veins.

The hopes of each producer to have a year, a more abundant year, a better year, was on each of their minds.

The pride of having the fields look as they did as I drove through Iowa showed me that perhaps, the American Dream is still alive and kicking. American Agriculture is at it's best. The challenge to do better, the pride to accomplish more. This was and still is my Dream.

This story was written by Glen Moeller, co-owner and founder of Next Generation Ag Advocates www.nextgenag.us. Glen has been assisting farmers and landowners for more than 15 years. He retired in 2015 after 40 years of farming but remains active in the agricultural community. He can be reached at info@nextgenag.us.