



For Immediate Release
Contact: Jess Chipkin
jess@CrateFreeIL.org 630-263-9153

Prominent Animal Welfare, Environmental, Farming Organizations Gather To Address Impact of Factory Farming in Illinois

*Humane Society of the United States Forms Illinois Agricultural Advisory Council
Consumers Petition Major Factory Farmer to Phase Out Gestation Crates*

July 31, Huntley, IL – [Crate Free Illinois](#), a 501c3 nonprofit, will host an event on Friday, August 25, 12:00 PM at [Nana](#), an organic restaurant in Chicago, to call attention to the growing threat of Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs) in Illinois to animal welfare, the environment, and local farmers.

Mike Nowak, environmental advocate and host of the [Mike Nowak Show](#), will moderate a panel of animal welfare, environmental and farming experts, including Scott Beckstead, Rural Affairs Director, [The Humane Society of the United States](#); Jessica Fujan, Midwest Region Director, [Food and Water Watch](#); Cliff McConville, farmer and Vice Chair, [Band of Farmers](#); Matthew Alschuler, an active member of [HOMES](#), an organization in NW Illinois that prevented the construction of a mega dairy and returned to farmland; and Omar Solis, owner of the organic restaurant [Nana](#).

Humane Society of the United States Forms Illinois Agricultural Advisory Council

The formation of the Illinois Agricultural Advisory Council, the twelfth state council established by The Humane Society of the United States, will be announced at the event by Beckstead. The Council will serve to promote farmers and ranchers that answer to higher animal welfare and environmental standards as the foundation of economic vibrancy in rural communities.

“We are proud to work together with Illinois’ family farmers and environmental groups to achieve more humane and sustainable agricultural practices in our state,” said [Marc Ayers](#), Illinois State Director of the United States Humane Society. “Our goal is to promote practices that benefit not only the animals, but the consumer, our environment and the economic vitality and future of our traditional family farmers.”

Consumers Petition Major Factory Farmer to Phase Out Gestation Crates

Crate Free Illinois founder, Jessica Chipkin, will also discuss the organization’s recent Change.org petition asking [The Maschhoffs](#), the largest hog production company in Illinois, to phase out the use of gestation crates on both family owned and contract farms. With 162,915 signatures, the petition earned strong public support and clearly illustrates the consuming public’s concern with how their food is produced.

“As in any industry, consumer attitudes and behavior drive change. We have seen it in technology, in retail, and over the past few years we are clearly seeing it in food production,” states Chipkin. “The Maschhoffs are successful business people, so we are hopeful they recognize the growing intolerance of extreme confinement practices and will join [other producers](#) already transitioning to 100% crate-free production.”

The event, which is open to the public, will take place on Friday, August 25, 2017, from 12 Noon to 1 PM, at [Nana](#), **3267 S. Halsted Street in Chicago**. There is no charge to attend.

About Crate Free Illinois

Crate Free Illinois is an Illinois-based, not-for-profit animal welfare organization. Formed in 2015, Crate Free Illinois’ mission is to educate consumers about the extreme confinement of factory farm animals and advocate for legislative change to ban gestation crates, battery cages and veal crates. Learn more at <http://www.CrateFreeIL.org> or follow at [facebook.com/Cratefreeillinois](https://www.facebook.com/Cratefreeillinois) [@CrateFreeIL](https://www.instagram.com/CrateFreeIL)

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