



Investor Relations | Smithfield Foods USA, Global Food Company

# Judge Rejects Attack on Clean Renewable Energy in North Carolina

SMITHFIELD, Va., March 21, 2023 /PRNewswire/ -- A North Carolina administrative law judge has rejected a challenge to a general permit issued by the North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) authorizing the construction and operation of methane digesters for animal waste management.

The judge held that the permit was lawfully issued in accordance with specific directives from the North Carolina General Assembly.

The Environmental Justice Community Action Network and Cape Fear River Watch brought the legal action, which sought to require DEQ to consider "alternative technologies" in issuing the permit for anaerobic digesters.

Smithfield's digesters produce clean, low-carbon, renewable natural gas (RNG) by capturing methane emissions from hog lagoons. These projects reduce greenhouse gas emissions (GHG), reduce flooding and provide diversified income streams for family farmers. The North Carolina General Assembly and Governor Roy Cooper called for such biogas projects in the state's [Clean Energy Plan](#).

"This is a huge victory for hog farmers who are adopting innovative technologies to protect the environment," said Stewart Leeth, chief sustainability officer for Smithfield Foods. "Our biogas projects produce low-carbon RNG and represent a substantial financial commitment to transform the future of clean energy and sustainable agriculture and improve the quality of life in surrounding communities.

"It defies logic that these environmental groups, which initially supported and encouraged digesters and covered lagoons, would attack Smithfield's voluntary efforts to produce clean, renewable energy and enhance water and air quality in North Carolina."

Smithfield, which also annually contributes \$2 million to the State of North Carolina for environmental enhancements, has invested tens of millions of dollars in clean energy technology, including RNG projects, as part of its goal to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 30% and become carbon negative in its company-owned operations by 2030.

The judge's final decision is available [here](#).

## About Smithfield Foods, Inc.

Headquartered in Smithfield, Virginia, since 1936, [Smithfield Foods, Inc.](#) is a U.S. food company that employs nearly 60,000 people in seven countries and partners with thousands of American farmers. As one of the world's leading vertically integrated protein companies, we are dedicated to producing "Good food. Responsibly.®" to feed a growing world population. We have pioneered [sustainability standards](#) for more than two decades, including our industry-leading commitments to become carbon negative in our U.S. company-owned operations and reduce GHG emissions 30% across our entire U.S. value chain by 2030. We believe in the power of protein to end food insecurity and have donated hundreds of millions of food servings to food banks, disaster relief efforts and community outreach programs in all 50 U.S. states. Smithfield boasts a portfolio of high-quality iconic [brands](#), such as Smithfield®, Eckrich®, Gwaltney® and Nathan's Famous®, among many others. For more information, visit [www.smithfieldfoods.com](http://www.smithfieldfoods.com) and connect with us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [LinkedIn](#) and [Instagram](#).

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