

Role #4—Meat Industry Representative from Texas

Concern #4—Folks, millions of people rely on Ogallala water, including my company's employees and their families, the farmers of the High Plains, and most meat-eating Americans. The economy of the region depends on the aquifer's water. Restricting our ability to pump water will cause financial problems for many of us.

Most of the water pumped from the Ogallala is used to irrigate crops, much of which are grown to feed livestock. Throughout the 1980s and 1990s, the largest beef-packing company of the High Plains increased employment from 9,500 to 52,000 people, and sales grew from \$4.6 billion to \$16.9 billion. In October 2001, the company merged with the world's largest poultry producer, making it the nation's largest meat-packing company. The company, which processes beef, pork, and poultry, now claims the largest percentage of the U.S. market, serving as the nation's (and perhaps the world's) largest beef processor. I represent the company.

The previous chief executive officer of this company based in the High Plains also served on the board of directors for several organizations, including a federal reserve bank, a major energy company, a petroleum corporation, and the National Livestock and Meat Board. Clearly, the meat industry is big business in the United States, and upper-level meat industry executives are major players on the national and international business scene.

My company now provides thousands of jobs across the United States, keeps meat and grain farms in business, and feeds the nation. We have been a responsible neighbor, constructing wastewater treatment systems to reduce ammonia discharge into the Missouri River and resolving water quality issues at former facilities in Texas.

Source:
Center for Study of Responsive Law, 2005 (E).

