

FACTORY FARM OFFENDER

OHIO FRESH EGGS (FORMERLY BUCKEYE EGG FARM)

Ohio Fresh Eggs LLC
11212 Croton Rd.
Croton, OH 43013
Phone: (740) 893-7200
Web Site: N/A

CEOs: Don Hershey and Orland Bethel, Age: N/A, Salary: N/A

COMPANIES (dba): Buckeye Egg Farm is currently known as, owned and operated by Ohio Fresh Eggs, which is jointly owned by Ohio Ag Investors (owned by Don Hershey) and Hillandale Farms (owned by Orland Bethel). Buckeye Egg Farm was previously owned by the infamous, German-born Anton Pohlmann. Anton's son, Klaus Pohlmann, owned Pohlmann Hog Farm in Crawfordsville, Indiana, but faced similar environmental and animal abuse issues and was finally shut down by the state after 14 years in business. Both Anton and Klaus returned to Germany. Ohio Fresh Eggs bought the former Buckeye Egg Farm in February 2004.

FORTUNE 500 RANKING: N/A - Privately owned company.

ANNUAL REVENUE: As a privately held company, Ohio Fresh Eggs is not required to file regular financial reports with the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission. When asked, the company refused to disclose its revenue or earnings.

NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES: Ohio Fresh Eggs refused to disclose its number of employees.

HEADQUARTERS: Croton, Ohio

LOCATIONS: Ohio Fresh Eggs has facilities in Croton, Marselles, Goshen, and Mount Victory, Ohio.

BRANDS/PRODUCTS: The Company produces whole in-shell eggs sold in cartons.

POLLUTION VIOLATIONS:

- **Ohio** - The transfer of ownership of the egg production facility from Anton Pohlmann to Ohio Fresh Eggs, unfortunately, did not put an end to the repeated, severe environmental pollution. In autumn of 2005, the Ohio Department of Agriculture revoked Ohio Fresh Eggs' operating permits for their Licking and Wyandot County facilities due to recent, extensive environmental violations and also for providing false information on their application when they originally purchased the facility. The company has denied the allegations and requested a formal hearing to appeal the decision. The hearing is scheduled for June 2006.
- **Ohio** - In February 2002, several families filed suit against Buckeye Egg Farm, which, at that time, was owned by Anton Pohlmann. While the suit was pending, in July 2003 state officials ordered Buckeye Egg Farm to cease production of eggs. Buckeye lost its permits to operate, forcing Pohlmann to sell the properties and operations. Following court orders, the facility formerly ceased production. The properties and operations were sold to another egg producer in February 2004. On

February 18, 2004, defendants Buckeye Egg Farm and Anton Pohlmann agreed to a \$50,000,000 consent judgment. In addition, Anton Pohlmann promised to never return to agricultural operations in any of the three counties. He left the U.S. and moved back to Germany, his country of origin.

- **Croton, OH** - In November 2001, the Ohio Attorney General charged that Buckeye Egg Farm had violated the January 2001 settlement numerous times by discharging manure into the local waterways and causing massive fly infestations.
- **Croton, OH** - In 2001, a group of over 20 citizens who lived near Buckeye's Licking County egg farm filed a lawsuit in the Licking County Court of Common Pleas against Buckeye Egg. In September 2001, Buckeye Egg was charged with being a civil nuisance and jurors awarded the citizens of Licking County \$19.7 million.
- **Croton, OH** - The Ohio Attorney General filed a 27-count lawsuit entitled Betty Montgomery, ex rel v. Buckeye Egg Farm, LLP, et al. for disposing of dead chickens by dumping them in a field, improperly handling manure, and causing massive infestations of flies, beetles and other insects. The suit alleged 800 water permit violations. The case was settled in the Licking County Court of Common Pleas and the company agreed in January 2001 to pay a \$1 million fine and invest over \$350,000 in manure treatment equipment.
- **Croton, OH** - In 1999, a sizeable chicken manure spill killed fish in a fifteen-mile portion of Raccoon Creek. The Ohio Environmental Protection Agency filed charges against owner Anton Pohlmann after he refused to pay for the cleanup of the spill.
- **Croton, OH** - In 1983, the State of Ohio sued Buckeye Egg Farm for a massive chicken manure spill, which severely polluted local waterways. This was the first of many lawsuits and citations filed against Buckeye Egg Farm and Ohio Fresh Eggs.
- **Crawfordsville, IN** - Klaus Pohlmann, the son of Anton Pohlmann, owned and operated a 35,000-hog confinement complex known as Pohlmann Hog Farms, the largest swine confinement complex in the state of Indiana. This sprawling factory farm generated 40,000 gallons of liquid hog sewage daily. More than six manure spills from the facility between 1979 and 2001 decimated an estimated 70,000 fish in local waterways. The facility was finally shut down by the state after 14 years in business. Klaus Pohlmann left the U.S. and returned to Germany.

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH & SAFETY VIOLATIONS & LABOR STANDARDS VIOLATIONS:

The U.S. Department of Labor, Occupational Health & Safety Administration (OSHA) assessed Ohio Fresh Eggs (formerly Buckeye Egg Farm) and issued the following violations and fines between 2001 and 2006 for failing to provide employees with a safe work environment :

- **Croton, OH** - On April 15, 2005 and again on May 30, 2005, Ohio Fresh Eggs employees were exposed to dangers from construction, hazardous energy sources and other unsafe environments while management took insufficient steps to ensure employee safety.
- **Croton, OH** - On March 31, 2003, Buckeye Egg Farm employees were exposed to the hazard of electric shock in a number of places around the farms and management took no steps to ensure employee safety.

HUMANE SLAUGHTER VIOLATIONS & DOCUMENTED ANIMAL ABUSE:

- **Ohio** - The change in management from Anton Pohlmann to Ohio Fresh Eggs has, unfortunately, done nothing to stop the horrific cruelty these chickens are forced to endure on a daily basis. In 2005, Mercy for Animals, an animal protection group, documented the cruelty at these farms on

video and released the contents to the public. The group is challenging the "Animal Care Certified" label that pro-industry group United Egg Producers started as a marketing tool to capture the interest of consumers concerned about animal welfare. Ohio Fresh Eggs labels their eggs as "Animal Care Certified" as do nearly all other egg producers in the U.S., even though the chickens are still kept in tiny, confined cages and treated with the same abject cruelty they have been since modern factory farming began in the 1950s.

- **The Czech Republic** - According to Lidove Noviny, a Czech Republic newspaper, Anton Pohlmann is locally known as "The Chicken Hitler." In 2003, he opened a sprawling egg production facility in the Czech Republic after being banned from opening one in Germany. According to the article, his reputation is so bad, that plans to expand into Hungary were opposed by the country's president
- **Croton, OH** - On September 9, 2000, a series of tornados destroyed several warehouse buildings belonging to Buckeye Egg Farm. Inside those warehouses were more than one million egg-laying hens confined to wire battery cages and stacked row upon row in tiers. When the buildings' sides and roofs blew down, the cages were mangled and many birds were instantly killed, but most were trapped helplessly without access to food, water or veterinary attention. Upon hearing of the egg farm disaster, Farm Sanctuary staff and volunteers contacted Buckeye Egg Farm and successfully persuaded the company to allow the hens to be rescued. In the end, Farm Sanctuary helped rescue more than 3,000 hens. Some of the hens were transported to loving, adoptive homes and others were delivered safely to animal sanctuaries across the nation. Nearly 600 hens came to live at Farm Sanctuary's New York Shelter.
- **Germany** - In the mid-1990s, the German government banned Anton Pohlmann from owning animals or animal production facilities in Germany because of his infamous disregard for animal welfare.

FOOD SAFETY VIOLATIONS:

- **Croton, OH** - In February 2006, Ohio Fresh Eggs was barred from selling over 4 million eggs deemed unfit for human consumption by the Ohio Department of Agriculture. The eggs were stored in a barn at room temperature for a lengthy period of time, in violation of national health standards. According to company spokesman Harry Palmer, the eggs allegedly were not intended for retail sale but were being prepared for possible sale as animal feed.
- **Croton, OH** - In 1999, the Food and Drug Administration took action against Buckeye for selling salmonella-infected eggs.
- **Croton, OH** - In 1997, a class action suit was filed for violation of the Consumer Practices Act, charging that Buckeye routinely rewashed and repackaged eggs that had not sold, re-selling them with a new expiration date.

OTHER:

- **Croton, OH** - In September 2005, Fred Dailey, Director of the Ohio Department of Agriculture, revoked Ohio Fresh Eggs' operating permits, alleging that the company provided false information on the original application at the time of purchase. The company has denied the allegation and requested a formal hearing to appeal the decision. The hearing is scheduled for June 2006.

FARM SANCTUARY · P.O. Box 150 · Watkins Glen, NY 14891
Phone: 607-583-2225 · Fax: 607-583-2041 · info@farmsanctuary.org
WWW.FARMSANCTUARY.ORG