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Statement about Ohio agreement from Indiana Farm Bureau President Don Villwock:

“The Indiana agriculture community was surprised by Ohio Gov. Ted Strickland’s announcement Wednesday of a joint agreement between an Ohio agricultural coalition and a national animal rights organization that will avoid a contentious ballot initiative in that state’s November 2010 election. The jury is still out if this was a good or bad deal for agriculture because most are just now digesting the official language and details of the agreement.

“But this action is a good reminder to us all that Indiana is fortunate that our General Assembly has entrusted animal care standards to experienced members of the Indiana Board of Animal Health, ensuring that rules and regulations for raising livestock in our state are based on sound science and proven husbandry practices. Our Indiana Board of Animal Health has been a national leader and model on how to entrust animal care standards to trained professionals.

“Indiana Farm Bureau is proud of its members who work hard every day to raise livestock safely and humanely. Just last year we launched our “Champions of Animal Care” program to educate the public about our farmers’ commitment to humanely raising our livestock while protecting our environment. We are equally proud of our livestock farmers’ efforts to keep Indiana’s elected officials informed about the importance of animal agriculture to our local and statewide economies. We appreciate the support of the Indiana General Assembly when it comes to public policy that promotes Indiana agriculture and provides a safe and affordable food supply for Hoosiers.”