

FACTORY FARM OFFENDER

QUALITY EGG OF NEW ENGLAND

(FORMERLY DECOSTER FARMS)

Quality Egg of New England, LLC PO Box 515 Turner, Maine 04282 Phone:
(207) 224-8222 Web Site: <http://www.qualityegg.net/>

CEO: According to Quality Egg of New England's Web site, the company is under "new ownership" but the Web site does not specify the owner's name.

COMPANIES (dba): Quality Egg of New England, LLC purchased DeCoster Egg Farms in 1997 from its former owner, Austin "Jack" DeCoster. It is now known as Quality Egg of New England. Peter DeCoster, the son of Austin "Jack" DeCoster, is still involved in factory farming. He owns DeCoster Farms of Iowa, which operates Wright County Egg in Iowa as well as a large hog confinement feeding operation.

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

ANNUAL REVENUE: As a privately held company, Quality Egg of New England 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: When asked, Quality Egg of New England refused to disclose its number of employees.

HEADQUARTERS: Turner, Maine

LOCATIONS: Quality Egg of New England has facilities in Turner, Maine. Peter DeCoster has egg and hog farms in Iowa.

BRANDS/PRODUCTS: Quality Egg of New England produces only whole in-shell eggs sold in cartons. With more than four million laying hens, they produce more than 65 thousand cases of brown and white eggs every week. Currently, their products are sold exclusively in the Northeast. Wright County Egg and DeCoster Farms of Iowa produce egg and pork products.

POLLUTION VIOLATIONS:

DesMoines, IA - DeCoster's Iowa-based hog facilities have a sordid past

of repeated pollution violations. The State of Iowa has sued the operations five times. In June 2000, Iowa classified DeCoster as a "habitual violator" of the state's environmental laws, prohibiting the construction of any new facilities.

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH & SAFETY VIOLATIONS & LABOR STANDARDS VIOLATIONS:

Turner, ME - In 2002, the U.S. Department of Labor, Occupational Health & Safety Administration

(OSHA) cited the four companies that took over DeCoster Egg Farm for 27 safety and health violations. The companies are facing penalties totaling \$344,810. The four companies include: Maine AG, Maine Contract Farming, PFS Loading Services Inc., and Turner Maintenance & Services Inc. Maine Contract Farming was also cited for four alleged willful violations. The farm has a lengthy history of other serious OSHA violations as well.

Turner, ME - In 2002, DeCoster Egg Farm paid \$3.2 million to settle discrimination claims by migrant workers who originally sued the company in 1996. In 1996, OSHA fined the company after an investigation revealed poor working and worker housing conditions, prompting some supermarket chains to boycott DeCoster eggs. The lawsuit alleged that Mexican families lived packed together in small sub-standard dwellings in the farm's trailer park, while white families got their own better-equipped homes in town. The plaintiffs also claimed that Mexican workers were physically barred from contacting people off the farm's property and were not paid wages that had been promised. Claims were made by 900 Mexican workers, but nearly 1,500 Latinos are believed to have worked at DeCoster during the period covered by the settlement, 1988 to 2002.

DesMoines, IA - In August 2001, the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) filed a lawsuit against DeCoster Farms of Iowa accusing three male supervisors at four egg packaging plants of raping Hispanic female employees and threatening to kill or fire them if they reported it.

Turner, ME - In 1996, U.S. Department of Labor Secretary Robert B. Reich alleged that the DeCoster egg farm facilities were "as dangerous and oppressive as any sweatshop we have seen. Fear and intimidation kept these workers in this unsafe, unhealthy atmosphere and living in totally unsanitary conditions." Other state and federal judges and

regulatory officials described the farm facilities and management as:
“abominable, atrocious, dangerous, deplorable, egregious, habitual,
horrendous, inexcusable, negligent, oppressive” and “shameful.”

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