

A DIFFERENT WAY OF DOING THINGS



Rodney and Lee Kinnard of Kinnard Farms Inc., walk Monday in one of their feed barns in Kewaunee County. JIM MATTHEWS/PRESS-GAZETTE

GOING BIG ON THE FARM SEEN AS A CREATIVE WAY TO MAKE MONEY BY SOME, BUT ENVIRONMENTALISTS SEE ONLY RISKS

By Scott Cooper Williams | Press-Gazette Media

CASCO — The dairy cow, an iconic symbol of Wisconsin industry and culture, has become the center of an emotional struggle among neighbors in the rural outskirts of this farming community.

Kinnard Farms Inc., which has been a fixture in Kewaunee County for more than 60 years, is stirring anxiety among some of its neighbors with plans to double its herd from about 3,000 cows to 6,000.

The move would elevate the 5,000-acre Kinnard Farms — about 30 miles east of Green Bay — to one of Wisconsin's largest dairy farms.

State regulators have approved the expansion, but neighbors are challenging that action in partnership with an environmental group that warns of possible damages to the Kewaunee County countryside.

It is a confrontation that has grown out of sweeping changes in Wisconsin's farming environment, and it illustrates a fundamental dis-

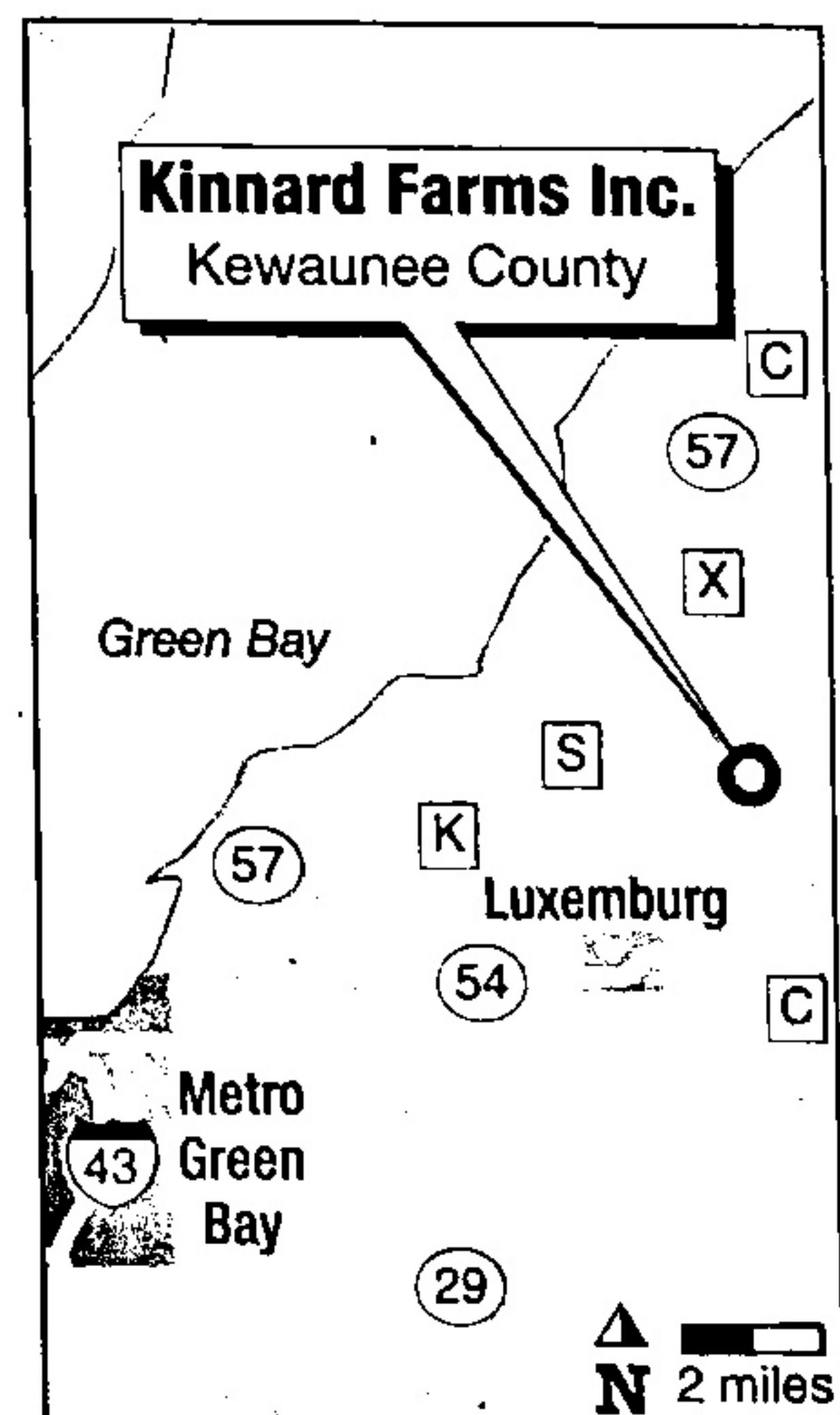
agreement about whether super-sized farms reflect a dark underbelly of the industry — or a creative path to prosperity.

The proposal

Midwest Environmental Advocates contends that an expanded Kinnard Farms would constitute a bloated operation of unhealthy proportions, jeopardizing water quality, among other things, by generating enough cow manure to equal the human waste output in a city of 200,000 people.

"This is a huge public health risk," said Kimberlee Wright, executive

» See FARM, A5



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