



Tuesday, 25 November 2003

## “The Meatrix is all around us...”

### **FARM links with US family farming organisation GRACE to publicise online Flash film exposing global agribusiness**

Spoofing the ‘Matrix’ trilogy, *The Meatrix* stars a mysterious trenchcoat-wearing bull, Moopheus, who offers young pig Leo a red tablet which opens his eyes to the ‘real world’, where agribusiness corporations are eradicating family farms and promoting intensive production methods. Although produced in the US, the film’s overall theme is just as relevant to the UK.

Using wit, pop culture references, and a send-up of the ‘stop-motion’ camera-work immortalized by the Matrix films, *The Meatrix* carries a strong message that the solution to the farming crisis lies with consumers. Following FARM’s input, the film now ends with a ‘UK Action’ page offering links to UK outlets for direct farm produce and groups campaigning on the issues raised.

Freddie Whitefield, FARM’s Research Officer said, ***“The steady take-over of food production by large agribusiness companies is a key force behind the crisis in farming, which currently sees over 300 UK farmers and farm workers leave the land every week.*”**

***FARM aims to engage consumers in the fight for a viable future for farming. The Internet is a powerful way of spreading messages fast – and we’re delighted to support GRACE’s efforts to open web-users’ eyes with this excellent film. In the US, the Meatrix is spreading like wildfire, now we’re helping give it a big boost in the UK too.”***

John Turner, a Lincolnshire dairy farmer and FARM board member, said, ***“Increasingly greater demands are being placed on farm animals, the land that supports them and those that care for them, with the consequence that animal health and welfare are suffering, farmland is becoming degraded and family farms are disappearing at an unprecedented rate.*”**

***““The Meatrix’ has a powerful message - it illustrates the potentially devastating effect the current trend towards industrialised food production is having and it helps explain it to those who can help make a real difference - the large proportion of the British public who love food & farming.*”**

***“Some farmers may find some parts of the film simplistic. But the overall message about the social and environmental impacts of the intensification of farming is very much in line with FARM’s own philosophy.”***

To enter the Meatrix go to [www.farm.org.uk](http://www.farm.org.uk) and click on the link at the bottom of the home page, or copy this link into your browser <http://www.themeatrix.com/> To fully appreciate the film, you need a soundcard and speakers.

For further information contact:

**Freddie Whitefield 0207 349 5833**

farm PO Box 26094 London SW10 0XZ

Tel: 020 7352 7928 Fax: 020 7351 4602 Email: [info@farm.org.uk](mailto:info@farm.org.uk) [www.farm.org.uk](http://www.farm.org.uk)

## Notes to Editors

- The Meatrix was created by Washington DC design firm Free Range Graphics for the US-based non-profit GRACE (Global Resource Action Center for the Environment), which works to end the destructive and dangerous practices of factory farming and to promote sustainable agriculture. [www.gracelinks.org](http://www.gracelinks.org)
- Barely two weeks after its launch, The Meatrix has been seen by over 1.5 million people worldwide, turning it into the most successful online advocacy film ever.
- *The Meatrix* is a product of the first-ever Free Range Flash Activism Grant. In February 2003, US design company Free Range Graphics invited hundreds of non-profit organizations to apply for free production of a Flash movie. After reviewing more than 50 applications, the grant was awarded to GRACE. [www.freerangegraphics.com](http://www.freerangegraphics.com)
- Latest figures from the Office of National Statistics show that 17000 fewer people were employed in agriculture over the year up to June 2003.
- FARM is a campaigning and lobbying group set up to build public support and create political pressure to ensure independent & family farmers survive and flourish in the UK and are recognised and valued as:
  - Contributing to national food security
  - Sustaining local economies, their communities and culture
  - Managing the countryside and its wildlifeFARM aims to expose the root causes threatening the survival of independent and family farms in the UK and globally.  
FARM is a membership organisation primarily for farmers, but also open to support from the wider public.
- FARM is holding a public meeting which will look at general issue of the increasing takeover of our food-chain globally and nationally by agribusiness as well as specific concerns about:
  - farm-gate prices
  - the power of the supermarkets
  - the reforms of the CAP
  - what GM crops would mean for UK farmers
  - the erosion of our national food security
  - the Government's lack of any long-term vision for farming

**Public Meeting: Town Hall, Market Place, Chipping Norton, Oxon.  
Saturday, 6<sup>th</sup> December  
Starts: 6.00pm**

**For further information contact: Helen Angell 020 7352 7928**