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# Initiative seeks roomier pens for pigs, calves

**By Howard Fischer**

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PHOENIX — Backers of a measure to restrict how calves and pigs can be penned in Arizona have raised more than \$430,000 so far to put the initiative on the November ballot and persuade voters to support it.

Newly released financial disclosure statements show the biggest contributor is Farm Sanctuary. That organization, which bills itself as "the nation's leading farm animal protection organization," kicked in \$142,000 so far.

Another \$133,000 came from the Humane Society of the United States, with an additional \$25,000 coming from the Arizona Humane Society.

Foes of the initiative have so far raised \$334,767, with \$202,500 of that coming from the Arizona Pork Council, with another \$24,100 from the Arizona Cattle Feeders Association.

Petitions to put the measure on the ballot are expected to be submitted Thursday.

The initiative, if approved in November, would make it illegal to confine a pig during pregnancy or any calf raised for veal for the majority of the day in any manner that precludes it from lying down, fully extending limbs or turning around freely. Farmers would be given until 2013 to comply.

In Arizona, the biggest effect would be in the pork industry. Cheryl Naumann, president of the Arizona Humane Society, said the main user of the pens targeted by the initiative is a company called PFFJ in Snowflake. The company's name stands for Pigs for Farmer John, a major pork products distributor.

A company spokesman referred all calls to the campaign to defeat the measure.

Tom Miller, a former pig farmer who now represents the Arizona Pork Council, said there is nothing inhumane about the pens, which he said measure about 70 by 26 inches. He said it keeps the sometimes aggressive sows apart and allows animals to get individual attention.

Naumann said there are other ways to do that. "All they have to do to come into compliance is increase the pen size," she said.

But Miller said the groups backing the plan have a larger agenda. "They want to stop production of meat animals," he said. "They're using the stalls as a pretense to do this."

Naumann said she is a vegetarian, but that the issue isn't meat but how it is produced.

Paul Shapiro, director of the factory farming campaign of the Humane Society of the United States, said the goal is solely "to reduce suffering by animals wherever we can." He said there is no hidden agenda.

Naumann said that other pork producers in Arizona raise their pigs without gestation pens. Miller, however, said that the initiative supporters are ignoring the realities of farmers having to produce more meat for more people on fewer acres.

The Arizona measure is not unique: Shapiro's group was a key driving force behind a similar 2002 measure in

Florida that was approved by a 55-45 margin.

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