

Imagine what it would be like to live in your dream home. You know, the perfect place that you have worked so hard to get, the one you envision your children growing up in, the one you hope to live in forever, the one that will be host to all your memories. Now imagine right next door to that dream home, you get some stinky neighbors, actually you get millions of stinky neighbors. Leach in Delaware County is home. It is where we were raised and where we had hoped to raise our children. Our family has lived and worked here for over 45 years. Sadly, in recent years, Leach has also become home to a multitude of poultry farms. Poultry farms that are packed full of these stinky neighbors. This is my reality; my dreams have become my nightmares. We currently live in our dream home, and as I look across the field, I am able to see the construction beginning on six new poultry houses that will contain over 180,000 chickens and be within 100 yards of my backyard. I look across the field with tears in my eyes, as I know our summer gatherings and parties will never be the same. Would you want to smell burning chicken carcasses while you swim? Would you want to have to swat flies the entire time you are trying to relax by the pool? Food outside? Forget about it! You will lose your appetite once you smell the ammonia coming from these houses. Does that sound like a dream place to you? It's a nightmare. A nightmare that has us all wondering what can be done? I have written letters, made phone calls, signed petitions, reached out to the news media and attended meetings. All while watching the numbers rise. Any direction I look from my home I see either poultry houses up and running or the construction of new poultry houses beginning. Delaware County has become the destination of choice for poultry farmers. The number of farms being built in this county, greatly surpasses any other Oklahoma county. This increase has residents like myself now living amongst air and water contaminants. Locals have

had to watch the value of their properties plummet as we fear for our health. Weâ€™ve seen reports of creeks being contaminated, wells running dry and breathing issues due to the ammonia. I support agriculture. Our family has owned and operated a livestock auction for more than 40 years. We continue to run cattle and deal in ranching and farming on a daily basis. This is not an individual farm I am complaining about. This is a huge company taking over our community. These poultry farms are not owned by locals. Out-of-state owners are purchasing our land and destroying our community. Why would they care? They do not have to live in the smell, the air contaminates or deal with the fear of contaminated drinking water; sadly, we do! Our son is a student at Leach Public School. The poultry farms are so abundant in this area, they are even within a mile of the school grounds. He complains of how bad it stinks when they are on the playground. When other schools come for ball games or other extracurricular activities, the parents and children act as if they may gag and ask, "What is that smell?" We have gone from a community of lifelong residents so proud to call this place home to nervous individuals trying desperately to relocate. In this process, we are having to face major financial difficulties, as our properties are nowhere near market value. We are being forced out. Delaware County has been monopolized by an out-of-state company. Residents have pleaded, reached out for help, and still to no avail. They do not care for our land or our residents. They have taken over, and we are left with a hard decision. Leave or stay and live with stinky neighbors. Carrie Warren lives in Leach. [Subscribe to Daily Headlines](#) Sign up! * I understand and agree that registration on or use of this site constitutes agreement to its user agreement and privacy policy.