

Cartoonist Fired After Poke at Big Ag CEOs

Rick Friday, the longtime cartoonist whose drawings had appeared in the Iowa-based publication [Farm News](#) for more than two decades, drew his final cartoon for the publication last week, he said.

In a Facebook message posted April 30, Friday suggested he was fired because his cartoon “insulted” someone affiliated with one of the corporations mentioned in a cartoon that ran last week.

The cartoon that allegedly got Friday fired involved a farmer responding to another farmer who said he wished there was money in farming. “There is. In year 2015 the CEOs of Monsanto, DuPont Pioneer, and John Deere combined made more money than 2,129 Iowa farmers,” the farmer replied.

Here is [Friday’s post](#) (verbatim) on the matter (emphasis mine):

Again, I fall hard in the best interest of large corporations. I am no longer the Editorial Cartoonist for Farm News due to the attached cartoon which was published yesterday. Apparently a large company affiliated with one of the corporations mentioned in the cartoon was insulted and cancelled their advertisement with the paper, thus, resulting in the reprimand of my editor and cancellation of It’s Friday cartoons after 21 years of service and over 1090 published cartoons to over 24,000 households per week in 33 counties of Iowa.

I did my research and only submitted the facts in my cartoon.

That’s okay, hopefully my children and my grandchildren will see that this last cartoon published by Farm News out of Fort

Dodge, Iowa, will shine light on how fragile our rights to free speech and free press really are in the country.



What to make of this?

First, it's important to note that Friday claims that the information in his cartoon was factual. If that is the case—and taking a look at [the highest paid CEOs in the country](#), there's little reason to doubt the claim—the event is noteworthy.

As a former member of the fourth estate, I can say with some confidence that most people in media view it as their *raison d'être* to speak (forgive the cliché) truth to power, particularly *corporate* power.

So if Friday was fired for simply doing what most people view as his job as a cartoonist, it wouldn't be surprising to see this story grow.

What do you think? Was the paper right to fire Friday to protect their bottom line? Or should they have taken a stand at the risk of their advertising? More importantly, do you think the press will unite and begin to pressure the corporations to find out who used his or her influence to have Friday fired?