



# Mad Sheep: The True Story Behind the USDA's War on a Family Farm

*Linda Faillace*

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## **Mad Sheep: The True Story Behind the USDA's War on a Family Farm** Linda Faillace

In the mid-1990s Linda and Larry Faillace had a dream: they wanted to breed sheep and make cheese on their Vermont farm. They did the research, worked hard, followed the rules, and, after years of preparation and patience, built a successful, entrepreneurial business. But just like that, their dream turned into a nightmare. The U.S. Department of Agriculture told them that the sheep they imported from Europe (with the USDA's seal of approval) carried a disease similar to the dreaded BSE or "mad cow disease." After months of surveillance--which included USDA agents spying from nearby mountaintops and comically hiding behind bushes--armed federal agents seized their flock. The animals were destroyed, the Faillace's lives turned upside down, all so that the USDA could show the U.S. meat industries that they were protecting America from mad cow disease--and by extension, easing fears among an increasingly wary population of meat-eaters. *Mad Sheep* is the account of one family's struggle against a bullying and corrupt government agency that long ago abandoned the family farmer to serve the needs of corporate agriculture and the industrialization of our food supply. Similar to the national best-selling book, *A Civil Action*, readers will cheer on this courageous family in its fight for justice in the face of politics as usual and the implacable bureaucracy of the farm industry in Washington, DC.

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