EMIT LESS Act One Pager

Endorsed By: Food and Agriculture Climate Alliance (FACA) ; Dairy Farmers of America (DFA) ; Environmental Defense Fund (EDF) ; National Milk Producers Federation (NMPF) ; Danone North America ; Breakthrough Institute ; American Feed Industry Association (AFIA) ; Clean Air Task Force (CATF) ; National Council of Farmer Cooperatives (NCFC) ; Environmental Working Group (EWG) ; International Dairy Foods Association (IDFA) ; McDonald’s ; Bipartisan Policy Center (BPC) Action ; National Cattlemen’s Beef Association (NCBA)

BACKGROUND

American dairy farmers and cattle ranchers are making important strides in environmental stewardship. As the United States works toward achieving climate-neutrality, dairy and beef producers have a powerful opportunity to contribute by voluntarily reducing enteric methane emissions from their operations. Enteric methane is naturally emitted during the digestive process of most livestock species. Methane is a greenhouse gas many times more potent than carbon dioxide. The agricultural sector accounts for 10% of all greenhouse gas emissions in the United States, and enteric methane is the single largest source of agricultural methane emissions. Enteric methane is also the second largest source of all methane emissions in the nation, second only to the oil and gas industry.

WHAT DOES THE EMIT LESS ACT DO?

The Enteric Methane Innovation Tools for Lower Emissions and Sustainable Stock (EMIT LESS) Act aims to address enteric methane and create opportunities for producers by empowering the USDA to quantify the environmental benefits of products and practices that reduce enteric methane emissions, and creates voluntary incentives through conservation programs to ease their adoption by producers. Specifically, the bill would:

- Create enteric methane product and practice testing capacity through USDA’s Agricultural Research Service (ARS);
- Establish and expand training programs that familiarize farmers and ranchers with practices that reduce enteric methane emissions;
- Add practices that reduce greenhouse gas emissions, including enteric methane, under USDA’s Conservation Innovation Grant’s On-Farm Conservation Innovation Trials;
- Direct USDA to review conservation practice standards that can assist in reducing enteric methane, revise those as needed, and establish any appropriate new standards; and
- Amend USDA’s Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) and Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) to provide financial incentives for farmers and ranchers to voluntarily use products and implement practices that reduce enteric methane.