



## **CLIMATE CHANGE**

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### Issue:

Sustainability and efficiency on the farm go hand-in-hand. Farmers today are doing more with less thanks to innovation and technology. In fact, U.S. agriculture would have needed nearly 100 million more acres 30 years ago to match today's production levels. Smarter farm equipment, precision ag tools and biotechnology are helping farmers care for their crops, while using less water, fertilizer and pesticides.

As farm efficiency goes up, greenhouse gas emissions are going down in the livestock sector. Although livestock emissions get a lot of attention in discussions around sustainability, they make up less than 3% of overall emissions in the U.S., and those numbers are declining thanks to improvements in feed and production.

Farmers are also improving efficiency and promoting healthy soil by planting cover crops and adopting practices that reduce and, in some cases, eliminate the need for tilling—or turning the soil over. Healthier soil also means cleaner air and water, as farmers trap carbon in the soil and reduce runoff with these practices.

Agriculture can also play a role in offsetting emissions beyond the farm gate. From climate-smart farming practices to voluntary management of forests, grasslands, wetlands and croplands, farmers are not only reducing their footprint, but also are actively absorbing carbon from the atmosphere. According to the EPA, land management practices alone removed 764 million metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub> from the atmosphere in 2018. That is equal to taking 165 million vehicles off the road for a year.

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### Background:

Farm Bureau believes that adaption strategies and tools can be utilized to face the challenges of more inclement weather and a changing climate. Appropriate funding and emphasis should be given to agricultural research. Having the technology, traits and production practices will be more beneficial than burdening the economy with additional regulations.

Farm Bureau support policies and incentives that encourage the production and utilization of biofuels and renewable energy. The production and use of biofuels and renewable energy not only helps to reduce GHGs, but creates American jobs, encourages rural development, enhances our national security and protects Americans from price shocks. Increased biofuel production also diversifies our energy portfolio to make America more secure and resilient to the increasing costs for energy.

Farm Bureau does not support any actions or policy that federal agencies could adopt, or the utilization of any existing authority, to regulate emissions of GHGs. Farm Bureau did not support the past actions of EPA to regulate GHGs from new or existing power plants, particularly regulations based on unproven technologies or science, as it causes increased costs to produce food, feed, fuel and fiber without

measurably addressing the issue of climate. Farm Bureau would especially oppose any regulation of GHGs from agricultural sources.

We also do not believe unilateral action by the United States can make a difference on global temperatures or stop devastating weather events. Additionally, we do not support regulations that will increase costs for all Americans while not having a significant effect on the climate.

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**AFBF Policy:**

Farm Bureau supports the following:

- Alternative energy sources, which will minimize atmospheric pollution;
- Market-based solutions, rather than federal or state emission limits, being used to achieve a reduction in GHG emissions from any source;
- EPA's re-evaluation of burdensome emission control rules for farming practices, farm equipment, cotton gins, grain handling facilities, etc.; and
- The inclusion of the agricultural community as a full partner in the development of any policy or legislation.

Farm Bureau would oppose:

- Climate change legislation that establishes mandatory cap-and-trade provisions;
- Climate change legislation that is not fair, affordable or achievable;
- Any law or regulation requiring the reporting of any GHG emissions by an agricultural entity;
- Any climate change legislation that would make America less competitive in the global marketplace and put undue costs on American agriculture, business and consumers;
- Any climate change legislation until other countries meet or exceed U.S. requirements;
- Any regulation of GHG by EPA;
- Any attempt to regulate methane emissions from livestock under the Clean Air Act or any other legislative vehicle; and
- Taxes on carbon uses or emissions.

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