GREENHOUSE   GAS   and   SUSTAINABILITY  
  
08-24-16  
The mis-information continues concerning livestock's part in greenhouse gas emissions from the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization ( FAO ) report "Livestocks Long Shadow."  
  
The "Livestocks Long Shadow" reports indicates livestock is responsible for 18% of the worlds greenhouse gas emissions.  
  
Special interest and environmental groups such as Dr. Oz and Food Babe claim livestock accounts for as much as 51% of all greenhouse gas emissions, which is more than the transportation and energy sectors combined.  The transportation sector contributes 27% and energy sector 31% for a combined 58% of the United States greenhouse gas emissions. These figures are based on leading U. S. scientist and the Environmental Protection Agency's( EPA ) "Inventory of U. S. Greenhouse Emissions and Sinks" report.  
  
Frank Mitloehner, an air quality and animal science specialist from the University of California, Davis ( U C Davis ) in a report "Livestock's Contributions to Climate Change: Facts and Fiction" indicates animals are but a minor contributor to the U. S. and global greenhouse gas emissions.  He explains that livestock production/raising accounts for 4.2% of U. S. greenhouse gas emissions. According to reports on contributions:  
Beef Cattle    2.2 %  
Dairy Cattle   1.37 %  
Swine            0.47%  
Poultry          0.08 %   
Sheep           0.03 %  
Goats            0.01%   
Other Livestock  0.04%  
These emissions are verified by leading U. S. scientist and EPA.  A slight difference from 18% as stated in FAO's report.  
  
One major difference is that FAO's report applied a full life-cycle assessment for livestock ( all feed and resources that were required to grow and harvest that feed ).  For transportation, only contributions of fossil fuel burned were considered, not a total life-cycle assessment.   
  
Several activist and environmentalist promote "Meatless Monday's."  Mitloehner's information indicates that if all american's followed the practice of Meatless Monday's, the reduction in U. S. greenhouse gas emissions would total 0.6%  
  
The beef industry/business has improved its sustainability by 5.0% in just six years. A comprehensive life-cycle assessment to quantify and benchmark environmental, social and economic aspects of the beef business sustainability from 2005 - 2011 improvements include:  
Reductions:  
Emissions to Water    10 %  
Emissions to Soil         7 %  
Land Use                     4 %  
Water Use                   3 %  
Energy Use                 2 %  
Resource Consumption  2 %  
Greenhouse Gas Emissions  2 %  
Occupational Illness and Accidents  32 %  
  
These reductions and improvements in sustainability were accomplished through:  
Increased use of precision farming technology  
Improvement in crop yields  
Improved genetics, health and nutrition for cattle  
Increased use of bio-gas capture and conversion  
Improved implementation of right-size packaging  
Improved irrigation technology  
Improved farm equipment efficiency   
Improved waste water recycling   
  
Sustainable agriculture is raising food, fiber, shelter and energy in ways to conserve natural resources -- air, water, soil or land, minerals, forest, wildlife and grasses/forbes.  
  
Livestock's greenhouse gas emissions have been reduced due to improvements in production efficiency thus making livestock more sustainable throughout the livestock business.  
  
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