

Dairy Feed Management

Using fish oil in cattle diets

There has been a lot of press recently about using fish oil in cattle diets to reduce methane emissions. We asked Dr. Alex Hristov, Ph.D., P.A.S., associate professor of dairy nutrition at Penn State, about the practice. Here is his response:

“First, this is old news - the effect of fish oil fatty acids on methanogenesis and bacteria in the rumen is known.

“Second, if we feed all cattle in the U.S., roughly 95 million, with 2% fish oil, we'll need around 19,000 tons of fish oil DAILY (assuming an average of 22 pounds of dry matter intake per day).

“This may (I say “may” because the long-term effect is uncertain and the study was done on a few cows!) roughly bring about a huge 0.44% reduction in the total GHG emissions (2.2% from livestock x 0.2 (20% reduction in the study) = 0.44%).

“Third, if that was done, in no time there would be no fisheries left in the oceans. The aquaculture industry is already struggling to find an alternative to fish meal in fish diets as world fisheries are getting quickly depleted and fish meal is quite expensive.”



A newsletter for certified feed management planners

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EQIP funds available to dairy producers

Dairy producers have the option of requesting a feed management plan through USDA's NRCS EQIP. The first option is as a component of a comprehensive nutrient management plan (CNMP). The payment scale would be as follows:

<= 100 acres - \$4000
101-250 acres - \$5000
>250 acres - \$6500

The other option could be as a stand alone practice (feed standard 592) or in combination with other conservation practices. The maximum contract limit is 3 years and/or 4 groups of animals per year. Animal groups can include

various lactating groups (high, medium, low) and/or dry cow and heifer groups. The payment scale would be as follows:

Year 1 - \$1900/group
Year 2 - \$1700/group
Year 3 - \$1000/group

Only nutritionists that are certified can write plans for producers receiving EQIP funds. There could be potentially over 1000 dairy farms that would require feed management plans if CNMP becomes a mandatory component. It behooves all certified feed management planners to move towards the next step of becoming a technical service provider.

NEEDS project will focus on renewable energy

By Bob Gray, Editor
Northeast Dairy Farmers Cooperative
Newsletter

(From the April 17, 2009 Edition) A day doesn't go by when there is some story in the press about animal manure. Some of these are positive in terms of finding ways to most effectively use manure as a source of renewable energy or its application as fertilizer. However most stories are negative and either deal with manure spills or odors.

The livestock and poultry industry is working hard to find ways that manure can be managed in the most effective and affordable manner so that run-off can be reduced and renewable energy can be created from manure as well.

For the past two years there have been efforts to help the dairy industry in the Northeast look at new and emerging technologies that could be utilized to produce renewable energy from manure and help to reduce the run-off from manure in holding and storage facilities on dairy farms.

On April 9th, thanks to the help of Northeast Dairy Farmers Cooperative members, a new private non-profit organization was incorporated. The new organization, known as the Northeast Energy & Environmental Dairy Systems (NEEDS) Project, will seek funding to examine and evaluate technologies that could be utilized by dairy herds of all sizes throughout the Northeast Region.

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Welcome to this issue of *Dairy Feed Management*, a monthly publication featuring news of interest to certified feed management planners. For more about feed management issues, visit: <http://dairyalliance.psu.edu/resources/feed-management-planners/>

House Democrats split on Climate Change policy

By Bob Gray, Editor
Northeast Dairy Farmers Cooperative Newsletter

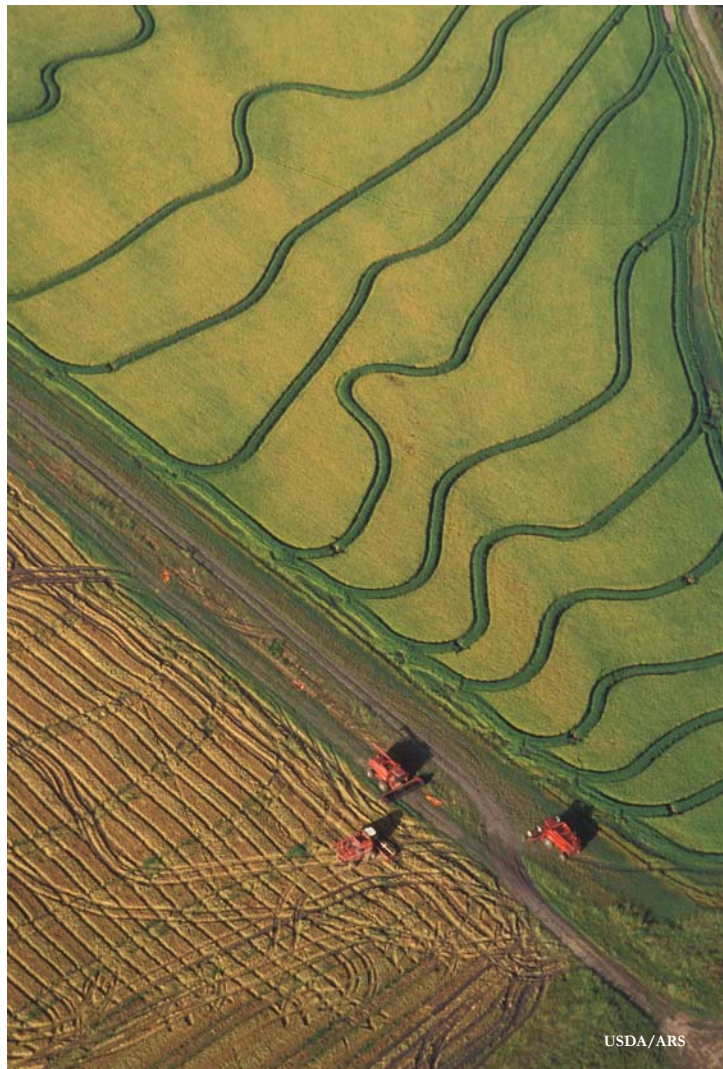
(From the April 17, 2009 Edition) The White House has made passage of Climate Change legislation one of its priorities and is pushing to get a Cap & Trade Bill passed on carbon emissions. Congressman Henry Waxman (D-CA) and Chairman of the House Energy and Commerce Committee is moving ahead with proposed Cap & Trade legislation which has been discussed in a previous newsletter. However not all of the House Democrats are on board with the Climate Change legislation. A major part of the opposition is linked to proposed renewable fuels standard rules by the Environmental Protection Agency that have just been released.

Chairman Collin Peterson of the House Agriculture Committee is enraged to say the least at the EPA Biofuels Rule since he believes it will significantly hurt the emerging biofuels industry, including ethanol production with overly restrictive air emissions rules. Therefore Mr. Peterson, along with other members of the House, will oppose any new Climate Change legislation since he believes this will further restrict the development of biofuels in the future from products such as switchgrass.

The Administration says that is not the case but they haven't convinced a number of members of Congress and the overall support for Climate Change legislation is becoming dicey at best.

As the debate continues on climate change legislation and carbon emissions there are some important facts that you should be aware of regarding greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) in the U.S. and elsewhere.

First of all the United Nations has reported that animal agriculture accounts for 18% of greenhouse gas emissions worldwide. However in that same report by the U.N., U.S. style animal feeding operations were reported as accounting for only 5% of GHG emissions worldwide. Within the U.S. animal agriculture accounted for just 2.5% of all U.S. emissions in 2006 as reported by the Environmental Protection Agency.



Spring AgSTAR Digest is online

The April issue of AgSTAR Digest is now available online. This publication focuses on anaerobic digestion and includes articles on updated costs analysis and funding opportunities. To view the spring issue of the journal, visit: <http://www.epa.gov/agstar/news/digest/index.html>

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