

Guide for the Agriculture and Livestock Sectors



Proposed Rule: Mandatory Reporting of Greenhouse Gases

This document is intended to highlight key information about the proposed Mandatory Reporting of Greenhouse Gases (GHGs) rule for the agriculture and livestock sectors. For additional information about this proposed rule, please view the proposal itself and the general FAQs available at: www.epa.gov/climatechange/emissions/ghgrulemaking.html. For more information on the proposed reporting requirements for manure management systems, please view 40 CFR part 98, subpart JJ of the proposed rule and see the Manure Management information sheet.

Would Emissions From Agricultural Sources Be Covered in the Rule?

EPA is proposing to require reporting from manure management systems that have emissions equal to or greater than 25,000 metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent (mtCO₂e) per year. No other GHG emission source associated with agriculture is proposed to be covered, however. The challenges to including other agricultural sources of GHGs in the rule are that available methods to estimate facility-level GHG emissions for these other sources yield uncertain results, and these sources are characterized by a large number of small emitters. In light of these challenges, EPA is not including other agricultural sources in the proposal because requiring reporting of GHG emissions from these sources at the facility level is impractical.

Will Dairy or Beef Producers Be Required to Report on Annual Enteric Fermentation Emissions of Methane (i.e., Methane Emissions From the Natural Digestive Processes of Cattle)?

No. The proposed rule would not require reporting of emissions of methane from ruminant animals via enteric fermentation.

How Many Livestock Operations Might Be Required to Report Emissions From Manure Management Systems?

Manure management systems for livestock manure emitting equal to or greater than 25,000 mtCO₂e per year would be required to report under this proposed rule. EPA's modeling of this emission source estimates that 40 to 50 of the largest livestock operations would be required to report at the 25,000 mtCO₂e per year threshold level.

Would Non-Livestock Farmers Have to Report Under this Rule?

No. This proposal would not cover emission sources such as rice cultivation, field burning of agricultural residues, composting, and agricultural soils. As such, EPA expects that most non-livestock farmers would not be required to report. Please note, however, that just like any other facility, a very large farm with a source category covered by this rule, such as stationary combustion sources with emissions at or over the 25,000 mtCO₂e per year, would still be required to report GHG emissions resulting from stationary combustion. To provide a sense of scale on this issue, 25,000 mtCO₂e are equivalent to emissions from annual energy use of about 2,200 homes. It is also equivalent to just over 58,000 barrels of oil consumed or 131 railcars' worth of coal. For more information on thresholds for reporting for stationary combustion

please view 40 CFR part 98, subpart C of the proposed rule and see the Stationary Fuel Combustion Sources information sheet.

How Does This Action Fit With Other Actions Taken by EPA That Relate to Livestock Agriculture?

A number of ongoing data collection efforts unrelated to this proposed rule are occurring at manure management facilities. EPA reviewed several of these programs, including the National Air Emissions Monitoring Study (NAEMS), the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA's) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), USDA's Census of Agriculture, the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES), and a variety of voluntary GHG reporting programs. EPA determined that none of the programs collect all information necessary to estimate farm-level GHG emissions from each manure management system that would report at the proposed threshold.

Does This Proposal Impose Tax or Other Levy on Beef Cattle or Dairy Producers?

No. This proposal would not impose fees or taxes on livestock or livestock producers, or any other facility covered by this rule. This proposal would simply require reporting of GHG emissions from manure management systems that emit GHGs at a level equal to or over 25,000 mtCO₂e per year.

Which Livestock Operations Would Have to Report Under the Proposal?

Owners or operators are responsible for determining if a facility meets the reporting threshold of 25,000 mtCO₂e per year. Owners or operators that believe their facilities might meet the reporting threshold might need to conduct monthly sampling of manure and analyze their emissions as described in 40 CFR part 98, subpart JJ of the proposed rule. EPA is also taking comment on the advantages and disadvantages of using additional screening tools such as a look-up table or computerized calculator to help owners or operators determine if they meet the reporting threshold. These tools could utilize data such as the type of manure management system and the average number of head that would be necessary to meet or exceed the threshold. Screening tools might have the effect of reducing costs and simplifying the decision-making process for owner or operators when determining if they would need to report.

How Much Would Complying With the Reporting Requirements in the Proposal Cost?

EPA estimates that the average cost to conduct the laboratory testing and do the emission calculations would be approximately \$900 per facility. More information about the costs of testing can be found in the Regulatory Impact Analysis (EPA-HQ-OAR-2008-0509-002).

What Is the Schedule for Reporting?

Facilities would begin collecting data on January 1, 2010. The first emission report would be due on March 31, 2011, for emissions during 2010. Reports would be submitted annually.