

News Release

05-06-2005

For Immediate Release



San Joaquin Valley
Air Pollution
Control District

TO:

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Dairy committee issues emissions report

(Fresno, CA) – A committee of experts tasked with evaluating dairy emissions in the San Joaquin Valley released a report today that is expected to help establish guidelines for regulating what could be the Valley's largest source of a major smog-forming pollutant.

The Dairy Permitting Advisory Group, by unanimous vote, recommends in the report that the Valley Air District consider a range of numbers in determining how much of a smog-forming compound comes from dairy waste. At the high end of the recommended range, dairies would be responsible for nearly twice as many emissions of volatile organic compounds as light- and medium-duty cars and trucks. At the low end of the range, dairies still would be seventh on the list of the Valley's top-25 emitters.

Current estimates gauge dairies as the Valley's top emitters of volatile organic compounds, which combine with other chemicals in the air to form ozone, the primary ingredient of smog. The estimates, though, are based on older scientific studies.

A lawsuit settlement last year between the dairy industry and the Valley Air District resulted in the advisory group being formed to evaluate new scientific studies and other information available on dairy emissions. The committee of scientists, environmentalists, government regulators and dairy industry representatives met 11 times from January through this week to evaluate scientific studies on dairy waste.

Today's report provides a range of new numbers to be considered by the district in determining how much pollution comes from dairy waste. The current estimate, from the older studies, is 12.8 pounds of volatile organic compounds per cow per year. The committee recommends the Air District consider a range of 5.6 pounds to 38.2 pounds per year per cow, with a middle-ground number of 13.3 pounds.

The committee also identified areas that need further study and recommends in the report that the Air District pursue more scientific research.

At 12.8 pounds per cow per year, dairies are considered the Valley's largest source of volatile organic compound emissions, putting out 38.25 tons of emissions each day -- about 9.7 percent of the Valley-wide total. The next-largest source of those emissions is light- and medium-duty trucks, which emit 37.41 tons per day, or 9.5 percent of the total.

At 38.2 pounds per cow per year, dairies would soar to 114.3 tons per day, or 24 percent of the total. At 5.6 pounds, dairies would be responsible for 16.8 tons per day, or 4.5 percent. Using the mid-range number of 13.3, dairies would be responsible for 39.8 tons per day, or 10 percent of the total, and would remain the largest emitter.

Dairies were exempt from air permitting requirements and pollution controls until last year.

"This committee's diligent work is laying the foundation for sensible pollution controls that are based on science," said Dave Crow, the District's Air Pollution Control Officer. "This is an unprecedented effort. The report will be carefully evaluated and submitted for public comment before a decision is made."

The Air District is scheduled to hold public workshops on the report and adopt a new per-cow emissions factor by Aug. 1. The emissions factor helps determine which dairies need air-pollution permits and emissions-reducing equipment. There are more than 2 million dairy cattle in the Valley.

The Dairy Permitting Advisory Group is comprised of:

- Dr. John Watson - Desert Research Institute
- Dr. David Grantz - University of California's Kearney Agricultural Center
- J.P. Cativiela – Dairy CARES, a dairy industry group
- Diane Bailey - Natural Resources Defense Council
- Bill Descary - a concerned citizen
- Kevin Hamilton - Community Medical Centers
- Dr. Deanne Meyer - University of California, Davis
- Carolina Simunovic - Fresno Metro Ministry
- Dave Warner - San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District
- Paul E. Martin - Western United Dairyman
- Denise Mullinax - Hilmar Cheese Company
- James Sweet - San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District

Current estimates for the largest sources of volatile organic compounds in the Valley are:

1. Livestock waste (dairy cattle): 38.25 tons per day, or 9.7 percent of total
 2. Light- and medium-duty trucks: 37.41 tons, or 9.5 percent
 3. Light-duty passenger cars: 33.64 tons, 8.5 percent
 4. Oil and gas production (evaporative losses): 29.6 tons, or 7.5 percent
 5. Pesticides: 25.78 tons, or 6.5 percent
 6. Consumer products: 24.89 tons, or 6.3 percent
 7. Prescribed burning: 17.7 tons, or 4.5 percent
 8. Off-road equipment (lawn/garden, construction, etc.): 15.4 tons, or 3.9 percent
 9. Aircraft: 12.31 tons, or 3.1 percent
 10. Coatings (paints and thinners, non-architectural): 11.6 tons, or 2.9 percent
- Source: California Air Resources Board, 2004 estimated emissions inventory

Although significant progress has been made in improving air quality in the San Joaquin Valley the past 13 years, the Valley air basin harbors some of the nation's worst air quality and is under federal mandate to reduce emissions of ozone-forming gases. For more information, visit www.valleyair.org or call the nearest District office: Modesto (209) 557-6400, Fresno (559) 230-6000 and Bakersfield (661) 326-6900.