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## US Dairy Innovation Center new report on carbon footprint study of fluid milk

Thanks to the American Farmland Trust for this update:

The Innovation Center for U.S. Dairy just released its [fluid milk carbon footprint study](#). The study is a lifecycle analysis conducted by the Applied Sustainability Center at the University of Arkansas, with support from Michigan Technical University. Key findings include:

- The total carbon footprint from 2007 consumption of fluid milk was 35 TgCO<sub>2</sub>e, or 35 million metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent. (Total U.S. emissions for 2007 were 7,282 TgCO<sub>2</sub>e; hence, fluid milk accounts for ~0.5% of U.S. GHG emissions.)
- The per-gallon carbon footprint of fluid milk consumed is 17.6 lb CO<sub>2</sub>e.
- Feed, Enteric Methane and Manure Management are the largest contributors to fluid milk's carbon footprint. Together with farm energy consumption, they bring the farm gate share of fluid milk GHG emissions to 72% of the total. The rest is made up by Transport, Processing, Distribution; Retail; and Consumption, Disposal.
- The largest source of variability in the carbon footprints of individual dairy farms is feed conversion efficiency, which impacts total feed consumption, enteric

fermentation and manure production. The study indicates that larger farms do better on this front.

Note that the study does not address the carbon footprint of alternative dairy production methods.