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Dairy industry completes fluid milk carbon footprint study as part of industrywide sustainability commitment

The U.S. dairy industry has completed a carbon footprint study that measured the greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions associated with a gallon of milk in the United States. Researchers followed the journey of a gallon of milk from the beginning of the life cycle when crops are grown to feed cows; milk is produced and delivered to processors; through processing, packaging and distribution; all the way to the purchase and disposal of the gallon of milk by the consumer. The completion of the study is a significant

first step for the dairy industry in a comprehensive, science-based approach to measure and improve its environmental footprint.

The Innovation Center for U.S. Dairy commissioned the Applied Sustainability Center at the University of Arkansas to conduct the GHG LCA of fluid milk, also called the carbon footprint study. The study, together with data from additional studies measuring GHG emissions, helps validate that total U.S. dairy GHG emissions are approximately 2 percent of total U.S. emissions. This is far less than earlier figures reported about

the global livestock industry that were incorrectly attributed to U.S. dairy.

The study identifies opportunities for efficiency and innovation across the fluid milk supply chain, including feed efficiency, manure management, energy management and fuel efficiency. A key finding indicates that management practices are an important driver of the carbon footprint for farms, plants and transportation fleets, rather than the geographic region, business model, or size of the farm or organization.

The carbon footprint study will be published in a peer-reviewed

scientific journal in 2011. In addition, studies on nutritional value, economic impact and other environmental measures such as water quality and conservation are underway.

Read more about the study on *Progressive Dairyman's* website at: http://bit.ly/5084_dairystewardship

—From Innovation Center for U.S. Dairy news release