



New tools for reducing dairy's carbon footprint

Innovation Center for U.S. Dairy | Updated: April 23, 2012

In celebration of Earth Day, the Innovation Center for U.S. Dairy has announced three resources to help improve sustainability, as well as communicate the dairy industry's progress on this topic.

The [2011 U.S. Dairy Sustainability Report](#) provides an update on progress toward the industry's sustainability goals. Two measurement Web resources — [Dairy Plant Smart™](#) and [Dairy Fleet Smart™](#) — provide milk processors and transporters with the tools to calculate their carbon footprints and identify opportunities to save energy and money.

In addition to these new resources, [USDairy.com/Sustainability](#) provides access to more decision-making tools like the [SaveEnergy resource](#), which connects dairy farmers with financial assistance opportunities for farm energy audits and equipment upgrades.

"We've spent three years in the field gathering research to support our science- and practice-based approach to improving sustainability across the value chain — from growing crops to feed our dairy cows; to processing and manufacturing real, fresh, nutrient-rich dairy foods and beverages; through consumption and packaging disposal," said Barbara O'Brien, president of the Innovation Center for U.S. Dairy. "The key learning we identified about dairy's impacts and opportunities for improvement made these new resources possible."

[Dairy Plant Smart](#) enables fluid milk processing plants to evaluate overall energy use — including production, transport, refrigerant losses and packaging — to identify opportunities to conserve energy use. In addition to reducing GHG emissions and lowering utility bills, energy efficient practices can help milk processing plants improve system reliability, prevent maintenance and shutdown costs, increase productivity and introduce new revenue streams.

Featured video: [Learn about ways processors can improve energy use](#)

[Dairy Fleet Smart](#) helps transportation managers identify ways to more efficiently deliver milk from the production facility to storage or retail by completing a 360-degree evaluation of fuel used. Adopting fuel-efficient best practices can save trucking companies a substantial amount in fuel costs, while also reducing emissions.

Featured video: [Discover ways transporters can reduce fuel use](#)

The Dairy Plant Smart and Dairy Fleet Smart tools feature case studies highlighting proven best practices and the associated cost and energy savings. The respective calculator tools also allow dairy plants and transport fleets to benchmark their energy efficiency performance against the U.S. average to identify areas for greatest improvement. As part of the U.S. Dairy Sustainability Commitment, Dairy Plant Smart and Dairy Fleet Smart aim to help the industry achieve a combined reduction of 705,457 metric tons of emissions and \$108 million in annual business savings toward the voluntary industrywide reduction goal.

"Resources like Dairy Plant Smart, Dairy Fleet Smart and the [2011 U.S. Dairy Sustainability Report](#) provide verified information, common measures and best practices to help producers, processors, manufacturers, transporters and brands improve their economic, social and environmental sustainability," said Jed Davis, director of sustainability at Cabot Creamery Cooperative.

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