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DBA Supports EPA's Reporting Exemption Proposal

The Dairy Business Association (DBA) supports the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) proposed exemption that would exclude farms from reporting air emissions of hazardous substances from animal waste and allow farms to better utilize time and financial resources towards effectively protecting human health and the environment.

Recently, the EPA has sought comments regarding the proposed reporting exemption. If passed, it would direct more than 3 million more hours and \$160 million towards developing more effective compliance measures to protect the environment and human health over the next 10 years.

"DBA strongly supports the proposed reporting exemption for hazardous air emissions from animal waste on farms and requests that environmental regulations be based on sound science in order to be fairly and effectively enforced," responded Laurie Fischer, DBA's executive director. "DBA does not believe that the existing Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA) and Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act (EPCRA) emissions reporting requirements for animal waste on farms are an effective mechanism for promoting compliance or protecting the public health or welfare."

According to Fischer, reporting and notification requirements under CERCLA and EPCRA serve as a trigger for federal, state and local authorities to assess whether an emergency response is necessary to avoid acute exposures to hazardous substances. DBA feels that this system does not best represent scenarios concerning animal waste on farms.

Assessments by the EPA note that the typical emergency response plan under CERCLA and EPCRA are inappropriate for emissions from animal waste on farms. DBA agrees with this position and also backs EPA's consideration that air emissions from animal waste occur over a broad, open-spaced area. As air emissions dissipate, their concentration declines along with their threat to humans and the environment.

"DBA recognizes that removing the reporting requirements for hazardous waste emissions under CERCLA and EPCRA does not affect the agencies' ability to bring enforcement action for violations of permits. Eliminating the reporting requirement will simply allow both the regulated community and the regulators to focus resources on minimizing violations and effectively protecting human health and the environment," Fischer said.

The Dairy Business Association is an industry organization comprised of dairy producers, corporate and allied industry supporters. DBA promotes the growth and success of all dairy farms in Wisconsin by fostering a positive business and political environment. For more information about DBA, please visit our website at www.widba.com.

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