

New study shows how farms can lower emissions

March 10 2010

(PhysOrg.com) -- A joint report from the law schools at UC Berkeley and UCLA recommends ways that farmers and ranchers can mitigate the impact of climate change. "Room to Grow" identifies barriers to lowering emissions and proposes concrete steps to overcome them.

California's agriculture sector plays a huge role in the state economy. But the farming industry is currently threatened by altered growing seasons, limits on water supplies, and record temperature changes. Room to Grow states that finding solutions for reducing emissions could benefit growers and consumers alike.

In doing so, it describes immediate cost-effective practices from the two largest agricultural sources: methane from [livestock production](#), and nitrous oxide from fertilizer usage. Dairy farmers can reduce methane emissions by altering feeding practices, improving animals' diet to enhance digestion, and lengthening the productive life of dairy cows to generate fewer emissions per unit of milk produced. Farmers can reduce [nitrous oxide emissions](#) from too much fertilizer usage by employing more precise and well-timed methods of fertilizer application.

More information about the report—which recommends new ways to improve methane management, fertilizer application, and water usage—is available [here](#). Its recommendations stem from the third of four joint [climate change](#) workshops organized by the Center for Law, Energy & the Environment, two centers at UCLA School of Law, and the California attorney general's office.

“This report offers guidance to policymakers, farmers, and ranchers who may be unaware of the cost-savings and often low-technology means of reducing greenhouse gas emissions,” says primary report author Ethan Elkind, the Bank of America Climate Change Research Fellow at Berkeley Law and UCLA School of Law. Elkind believes the agriculture sector has significant incentive to lower emissions, “given the risks it faces if climate change is not controlled.”

Provided by University of California - Berkeley

Citation: New study shows how farms can lower emissions (2010, March 10) retrieved 25 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2010-03-farms-emissions.html>

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