

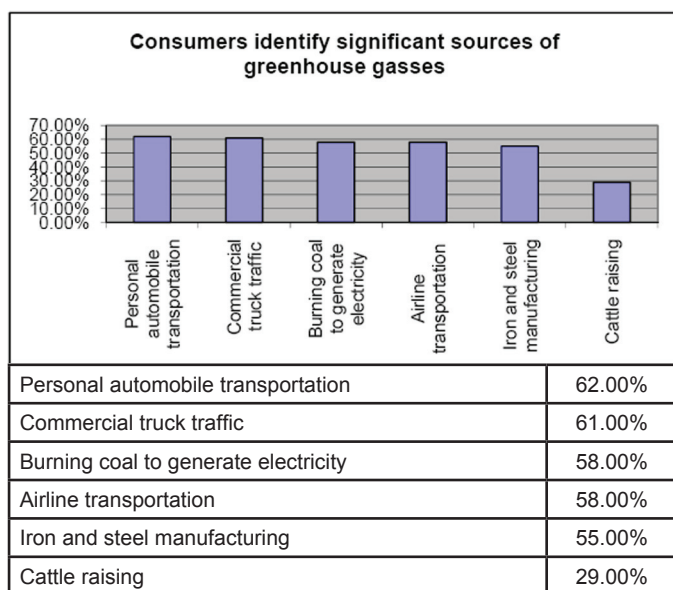


Are cattle warming the globe?

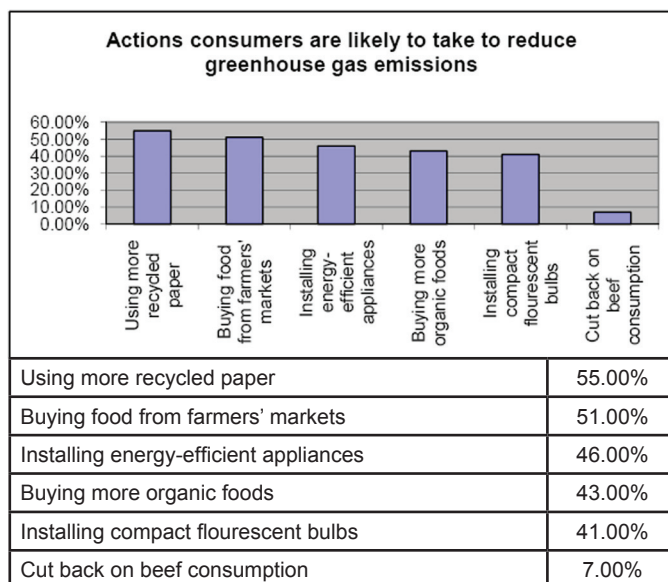
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Consumers want to save the environment as long as it's not inconvenient. Since the release of a United Nations (U.N.) Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) report in 2006, we've heard more and more about the carbon foot prints and the green house gases generated in livestock production. That report claims that, on a global basis, raising livestock generates more greenhouse gas emissions as measured in carbon dioxide equivalent than use of fossil fuels in driving cars and trucks. This factoid was picked up the media and has become the latest rallying cry of the anti-meat activist.

A second study that was release by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) didn't receive much media attention but should become a stump speech for every cattle producer and meat lover in America. The EPA report entitled "U.S. Inventory of Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Sinks" crunched the numbers to determine that 80 percent of annual greenhouse gas emissions come from the combustion of fossil fuels and only 2.3 percent are generated by food animal production.



Source: IPSOS Public Affairs, December 2007



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Although the EPA data clearly show the FAO statistics

are irrelevant in the United States, mainstream media and online sources have called for Americans to reduce meat consumption to save the planet. Beef checkoff funded media monitoring data show that cattle and global warming were the fourth-most covered beef industry environmental story in the past 12 months. Consumers are being bombarded with messages of global warming and told of steps they can make to help save the planet, including reducing the amount of meat their household consumes.

That's undoubtedly bad news for America's beef producers. Especially, when we realize that the average American consumer is only eating beef twice a week to start with. For most farm and ranch families, only one beef meal a week is unthinkable but for the average consumer it not that big of a leap. Research shows that that the majority (55%) of Americans believes global warming is real and is occurring because of human activity and needs immediate attention.

Consumers understand that fossil fuels are greater polluters than meat production, but it's nearly impossible for the average consumer to reduce commercial truck or airline traffic and they aren't willing to trade cars or pedal their way to work. The checkoff-funded study conducted by an

independent survey research firm, IPSOS Public Affair, shows that although consumers identified personal automobile transportation as a major source of greenhouse gases, they are unlikely to participate in carpooling or use public transportation. Of the actions consumers indicated they were most likely to take to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, three related to food: 51 percent are more likely to buy more food from local farmers' market; 43 percent are likely to buy more organic food; and 32 percent indicated they are likely to reduce beef consumption.

The reality of all these numbers is that consumers are more likely to give up a steak than their SUV. The month of May is national beef month and it's a great reason for cattle producers across the country to tell their production story. From the roof tops to the coffee shops, to local class rooms, it's the responsibility of cattle producers and industry partners to ensure that they're taking excellent care of the environment and telling the world about it.

For more information and resources about telling the beef production story visit:

<http://www.beeffrompasturetoplate.org/>