Engaging Farmers in Climate Solutions

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Farmers Are Aware of Climate Challenges

- Changing weather and precipitation will affect commodity planting decisions.
- More extreme weather damages crops, erodes soil, reduces workable field days and damages crops.
- No one pays more attention to the weather than farmers.
Obstacles to Farmer Outreach

• Farmers’ independent spirit
• Agriculture is not a factory. Farmers work with biology and many uncontrollable variables.
• Historic distrust of:
  • Market abuses
  • Government regulation
In 2013, agriculture was responsible for 7.6% of total GHG emissions.

Existing USDA conservation, forestry and working lands proposals would reduce U.S. GHG emissions by 2%; this is just a start.

- EPA has estimated changes in agriculture and forestry could reduce annual U.S. ag emissions by up to 25%.

- Reducing GHGs through agriculture can happen more quickly, less expensively and with more immediate benefits than other sectors.
Proven Track Record- CCX

• North Dakota Farmers Union
• At peak, over 3900 farmers in 30 states enrolled more than 3.85 million acres in carbon-offset practices
• Many credits are still on the books as farmers continue these practices, even since the Exchange closed.
The Pitch

• Stewardship- Farmers work very closely with the land and are the original conservationists.
  • When farmers understand that they are in a position to help with climate change, many will.
  • Farmers have made soil, water quality and wildlife conservation programs success stories.
The Pitch

• Bottom line- emissions reduction and sequestration practices are good for business.
  • Reduced costs from fuel and inputs, including irrigation
  • Better yields from improved soil health
  • Very good for marketing and communications
National Farmers Union Climate Policy Priorities

- Biofuels
- Renewable energy development
- Agricultural offsets
Climate-Smart Practices

- Rotational grazing
- Wetland creation
- Precision fertilizer applications
- No-till
- Cover crops
- Diversified production
Important Policy Considerations

- Voluntary
- Incentives
- Science-based
- Benefits of participation must cover earlier actors and adopters
• I am a third-generation family farmer from Turtle Lake, N.D.

• How would you engage in conversation regarding the climate implications of my farming practices?
Keep up with NFU!

@NFUDC
National Farmers Union
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Thank you!

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