U.S. Farms Are Boosting Productivity While Conserving Resources

U.S. farms are producing more food, feed and fiber without using more resources, helping to save water and soil, enhance biodiversity and conserve energy. Growth is driven by productivity gains, not more cropland or livestock.

U.S. Agriculture’s Share Of GHG Emissions, 2017

Global agricultural GHG emissions are 24%, but because of U.S. FARMERS’ & RANCHERS’ CONSERVATION efforts and IMPROVEMENTS in TECHNOLOGY, U.S. farmers have a LOWER GHG CONTRIBUTION than other farmers around the world, averaging 9% over the last decade.

Farmers Are Providing More Clean & Renewable Energy

U.S. farmers and ranchers are adopting and investing in RENEWABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY sources. In the last five years, farmers and ranchers have put in 132% more renewable energy sources including geothermal, solar panels, windmills, hydro systems and methane digesters. More than 130,000 operations employ renewable energy sources.

The use of ETHANOL AND BIODIESEL in 2018 reduced GHG emissions by 7.1 MMT—equivalent to 17 MILLION CARS off the road.

>15% Of All Farmland Is Used For Conservation & Wildlife Habitat Efforts

Total acres U.S. farmers have enrolled in certain USDA conservation programs. Equal to the total land area of California & New York. This does not include millions of acres in voluntary- or state-led conservation practices.
Sustainable Soil Use & Resource Conservation Efforts Increased
34 Million Acres, +17%, Since 2012 ³/

Cover Crops +5 Million Acres +50%
Conventional Tillage -26 Million Acres -24%
No-Till Conservation +8 Million Acres +8%
Conservation Tillage +21 Million Acres +28%

Top Soil Practices In 2017 ³/

U.S. farmers are proactively managing and preserving their soil by planting MORE COVER CROPS, using MORE CONSERVATION TILLAGE, and using MORE NO-TILL methods. These practices help to conserve soil, preserve and increase nutrients, and improve water quality. These practices trap excess carbon in the soil and reduce GHG emissions.

Greenhouse Gas Emissions Are Trending DOWN In U.S. Agriculture* ²/ ⁵/

*Pounds of carbon dioxide equivalent GHG emissions per bushel of corn and soybeans produced, per pound of cotton lint produced, per pound of rice, milk beef and pork produced.

FFASF represents U.S. farmers and ranchers committed to sustainably producing the world’s food, feed and fiber supply.

Data Sources:
1/ United States Department of Agriculture’s Economic Research Service
2/ Environmental Protection Agency’s Greenhouse Gas Inventory Data Explorer
3/ United States Department of Agriculture’s National Agricultural Statistics Service Census of Agriculture
4/ United States Department of Agriculture’s Natural Resources Conservation Service