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BY THOMAS J. QUAIFE

Attention benefactors: Here's an urgent need

BECAUSE OF RECENT lawsuits and court decisions, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency must get serious about enforcing air-emission standards under the Clean Air Act. But, it lacks good data on air emissions from livestock operations.

In an interesting twist, the EPA wants the various livestock industries to contribute money to the research effort. The pork industry has already heeded the call and committed \$7 million.

An implied threat hangs over the dairy industry's head that if it does not help fund the research, the data will be generated from pork and poultry farms instead (because those industries have committed money) and then the results will be generalized to dairy. It would not be in dairy's best interest for this to happen. Dairy-specific information is needed to formulate dairy-specific guidelines.

Unlike the pork industry, the dairy industry cannot use checkoff funds to pay for the research.

If any companies could step up to the plate and help underwrite this research,

it would be the single best thing they could do for the dairy industry. The money would help ensure that good, dairy-specific research gets done. The EPA estimates that it will cost around \$1.5 million to monitor four dairy farms at different locations around the country over a two-year period.

Farms that sign the EPA consent agreement and agree to be monitored will receive legal protections if they are found to be emitting higher amounts of ammonia and hydrogen sulfide than they should be.

Because of the legalities involved, the money needs to come from the dairy industry itself rather than Congress.

If you know of an organization that would be willing to contribute to this effort, contact one of

the following individuals:

- Rob Byrne, National Milk Producers Federation, phone: (703) 243-6111.
- Jean-Mari Peltier, National Council of Farm Cooperatives, phone: (202) 626-8700.
- Curt Gooch, Cornell University's PRO-DAIRY program, phone: (607) 255-2088.

