

1/20/07

Eat More Chikin
by
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All you Greenbrier County cattle farmers listen up for a moment if you will. Did you know that according to a United Nations report on Greenhouse gases your herds of beef contribute more to the Greenhouse gases in these United States than automobile emissions or the deadly hair spray? According to the UN study cattle generate 65 percent of the evil nitrous oxide, 37 percent of the dangerous methane and 64 percent of the dreaded ammonia, which purportedly contributes significantly to acid rain. Even though it is the cattle that produce all these nefarious emissions they still credit it on the scoring chart as “human-related” activity. And all the time we thought that all those beautiful cattle grazing contentedly in those vast pastures were picturesque and non-threatening to our environment. It sounds like we would have been better off environmentally to ban the cattle production and give an okay to the pulp mills and/or other smokestack pumping industrial plants who have wanted to call Greenbrier County home.

Henning Steinfeld, a senior UN Food and Agriculture Organization official is quoted as saying, “Livestock are one of the most significant contributors to today’s most serious environmental problems,” and urgent action is required to remedy the situation.” The report states prosperity increasing among humans throughout the world is the contributing factor, since the wealthier we become the more beef and dairy products we consume. Probably some truth in that but it sure sounds like the beginning of a war on cattle growers worldwide. “There ain’t room in this world for the both of us!”

For those in the cattle or dairy business they offer up some good forecasts for you, even though your success will mean ultimate devastation to the rest of humanity. They say, “Global meat production is projected to more than double from 229 million tons to 465 million tons over the next 50 years, while milk output is set to climb from 580 million tons to 1,043 million tons.” Another interesting tidbit in their report is that livestock now use 30 percent of the earth’s entire land surface consisting mostly of permanent pasture but it also includes 33 percent of the global arable land that’s used to produce feed for the livestock.

According to the UN “the livestock business is among the most damaging sectors to the earth’s increasingly scarce water resources, contributing among other things to water pollution from animal wastes, antibiotics and hormones, chemicals from tanneries, fertilizers and the pesticides used to spray feed crops.” My gosh, how did we allow them to sneak in on us and create such a problem. One suggestion given to correct this livestock threat is to create a substantial tax on those choosing to raise cattle for the stated purpose of “to discourage large-scale livestock concentration close to cities.” Now the question we must ask ourselves is this, “Do we believe this report or not?”

According to a 1998 report put out by the United States Environmental Protection Agency they listed the most prolific producers of greenhouse gases. *“Since the beginning of the industrial revolution, human activities have been adding measurably to natural background levels of greenhouse gases. The burning of fossil fuels — coal, oil, and natural gas — for energy is the primary source of emissions. Energy burned to run cars and trucks, heat homes and businesses, and power factories is responsible for about 80% of global carbon dioxide emissions, about 25% of U.S. methane emissions, and about 20% of global nitrous oxide emissions.... ”*

I think it’s amazing that in that list of Greenhouse gas contributors, published just 8 short years ago, there is not one mention of a cow, which leads me to doubt even more about the credence of the whole concept of “Greenhouse Gases and the Global Warming” theory. In my reading I have read treatise after treatise of those believing in the Global Warming theory and treatise after treatise of those, equally qualified scientists who do not share the validity of such a theory. Or sometime I just wait a few years and another report comes out repudiating the pro-gas theory people. If just 8 years ago those in the know were blaming all the vehicle emissions and now they’re saying cow manure is the more dangerous villain, why should I get all excited about it and change my entire way of living. And if it is true and the average mean temperature of earth is increasing by .6 or .8 % every hundred years, how many hundreds of years would it take to make this planet unlivable?

Of course, maybe we should take these things seriously and abide by Chick-fil-a’s advertising slogan which shows three bovine beauties holding up placards exhorting us to **“Eat More Chikin”** Let’s control our environment folks to secure its future, but let’s not allow it to control us.

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