



STATEMENT

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Statement From Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack on the Environmental Protection Agency's Greenhouse Gas Tailoring Rule and Its Impact on Bioenergy

WASHINGTON, May 13, 2010 - Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack today issued the following statement on the Environmental Protection Agency's Greenhouse Gas Tailoring Rule:

I want to thank the Administrator for agreeing to seek further comment on how to address the greenhouse gas benefits of bioenergy under the Clean Air Act. Energy derived from woody biomass, switch-grass and other sources has potentially enormous benefits for reducing greenhouse gas emissions, developing clean, home-grown energy, and providing economic opportunities for rural America. Markets for woody biomass can also bolster forest restoration activities on both public and private lands that improve the ecological health of our forests.

In its final rule, EPA acknowledges that carbon dioxide emitted from biological sources is different from carbon dioxide emitted from the combustion of fossil fuels. However, since EPA did not explicitly raise the issue of biogenic carbon in their proposed rule, the agency determined that they could not make a decision regarding the treatment of biogenic carbon in their final rule. Instead, EPA is committing to a process seeking comment on this issue separately while examining ways that forthcoming guidance can encourage bioenergy.

As this process moves forward, USDA is committed to working with EPA to ensure that rules designed to reduce the buildup of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere also encourage the development and utilization of biomass energy resources and avoid unnecessary regulatory impediments and permitting requirements.

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