

## **USDA Renews Agricultural Air Quality Task Force, Appoints Members**

**WASHINGTON, Jan., 27, 2016** – Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack today announced the renewal of the USDA Agricultural Air Quality Task Force and the selection of its members for the 2016-2018 term. The task force is composed of representatives from industry, agriculture, academia, government agencies, non-governmental organizations and other agricultural and environmental experts.

“The Agricultural Air Quality Task Force is a great example of USDA’s continued commitment to developing science-based solutions and conservation practices that enhance air quality and reduce the impact of emissions associated with agricultural practices,” said Vilsack. “I am confident that by bringing together a variety of perspectives and scientific insights to this task force, it will help provide guidance and solutions to resolve air quality challenges facing agriculture.”

The Agricultural Air Quality Task Force promotes USDA research efforts and identifies cost-effective ways the agriculture industry can improve air quality. It also helps better coordinate activities and resources among USDA agencies and other federal partners such as the Environmental Protection Agency.

The task force is charged with:

- 1) Advising the Secretary of Agriculture on air quality and its relationship to agriculture based on sound scientific findings;
- 2) Reviewing research on agricultural air quality supported by federal agencies;
- 3) Promoting intergovernmental (federal, state, local and tribal) coordination in establishing agricultural air quality policy to avoid duplication of efforts; and
- 4) Ensuring that air quality conservation practices supported by USDA are based on peer reviewed research and are economically feasible for agricultural producers.

The task force was formed in 1996 at the direction of Congress to address agricultural air quality issues. Chaired by Jason Weller, chief of the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Natural Resources Conservation Service, this is the ninth task force since the first was assembled in 1997.

Members of the 2016-2018 task force are:

### **Arizona**

Marguerite Tan, LLC Farm Operations

### **California**

Kevin Abernathy, Milk Producers Council

Cynthia Cory, California Farm Bureau Federation

Manuel F. Cunha, Jr., Nisei Farmers League

Samir Sheikh, San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District

**Colorado**

Jeff Collett, Colorado State University

Jon Slutsky, Producer

**Idaho**

April Leytem, USDA Agricultural Research Service

**Illinois**

Juan Tricarico, Innovation Center for U.S. Dairy

Yuanhui Zhang, University of Illinois

**Iowa**

Chris Petersen, Producer

Charles Stanier, University of Iowa

**Kentucky**

Clint Quarles, Kentucky Dept. Agriculture

Phil Silva, USDA Agricultural Research Service

**Louisiana**

Annette Sharp, Louisiana Dept. Environmental Quality

**Maryland**

Lara Moody, The Fertilizer Institute

Ana Rule, Johns Hopkins School of Public Health

**Michigan**

Gerry May, Producer

**Minnesota**

Larry Jacobson, University of Minnesota

**Missouri**

Terry Spence, Producer

**New York**

Hal Kreher, Producer

Patrick McCormick, Producer

**North Carolina**

Sally Shaver, Shaver Consulting Inc.

Lingjuan Wang Li, North Carolina State University

**North Dakota**

Shafiqur Rahman, North Dakota State University

**Oregon**

Merlyn Hough, Lane Regional Air Protection Agency

**Pennsylvania**

William Angstadt, Angstadt Consulting

**Tennessee**

William Norman, National Cotton Council

**Texas**

Brock Faulkner, Texas A&M University

Kelley Green, Texas Cotton Ginners' Association

Anissa Purswell, Enviro-Ag Engineering

Bryan Shaw, Texas Commission on Environmental Quality

Ben Weinheimer, Texas Cattle Feeders Association

**Washington**

Brian Cochrane, Producer

Nichole Embertson, Whatcom Conservation District

The first meeting of the Agricultural Air Quality Task Force is planned for the spring of 2016.

For more information on the AAQTF please visit the AAQTF web page:

(<http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail/national/air/taskforce>)