

Nebraska Farm Bureau is asking the state's congressional delegation to work with their colleagues to halt the Environmental Protection Agency's non-stop regulatory assault on the state's farmers and ranchers and their counterparts nationwide.

"Over the last 18 months, EPA has introduced massive new air and water regulations—including some that have no real environmental impact but merely create a paperwork nightmare for farmers and ranchers," Farm Bureau President Keith Olsen said Sept. 23.

"If these regulations are fully implemented, they will have a huge negative effect on Nebraska's agricultural economy."

Farmers and ranchers are America's original environmentalists because their livelihoods depend on high-quality air, water and soil, he said.

"However, EPA's refusal to acknowledge this has led to the introduction of many new, unneeded regulations."

In letters sent recently to Nebraska's U.S. Senators and Representatives, the Farm Bureau Board of Directors cited these examples of the regulatory assault on agriculture since 2009:

- EPA's "Endangerment Finding" gives it authority to regulate greenhouse gases under the Clean Air Act;
- The revised Spill Prevention Control and Countermeasure (SPCC) compliance requirements will require individuals with more than 1,320 gallons of above-ground fuel or milk storage to establish a spill prevention plan;
- Proposed revisions to coarse particulate matter (dust) standards, which may trigger

restrictions on everything from gravel roads to farm field activities;

- Proposed revisions to ozone standards;
- New hazardous emission regulations for stationary irrigation engines;
- An unprecedented re-evaluation of atrazine, despite 4,000 studies establishing its safety;

Action to expand federal authority over individual states' management of surface water quality;

- New Concentrated Animal Feeding Operation (CAFO) air emission reporting regulations; and
- Expansion of Clean Water Act permit requirements that leave open the option of regulating common pesticide applications.

EPA also proposed spray drift standards that allowed for absolutely no wind-driven drift, but later found this impossible to achieve and thus, pulled the idea, Olsen said. Regulations need to be well-thought-out and need to provide environmental benefits, he said.

“The list of new regulations and requirements is long and extensive. While we understand the desire and charge of EPA to protect the environment, this collection of EPA actions represents an agency that is, quite frankly, out of control,” Olsen said.