

ALEX PADILLA

U.S. SENATOR  for CALIFORNIA

The Converting Our Waste Sustainably (COWS) Act

The “Converting Our Waste Sustainably (COWS) Act” aims to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, improve air and water quality, and improve soil health through sustainable alternative and pasture-based manure management practices.

Specifically, this legislation will:

- **Make Alternative Manure Management practices eligible under USDA’s Environmental Quality Incentives Program** to award dairy or livestock producers grants to install equipment and infrastructure for pasture-based management, alternative treatment and storage practices, solid separation systems, and scrape technologies.
- **Provide technical assistance and training** to aid in the implementation of eligible manure management and composting measures.

As dairy and livestock operations face challenges posed by drought, floods, and higher feed costs, the COWS Act will support producers as they shift towards manure handling systems that provide environmental and economic benefits including:

- Reduced methane emissions and improved air quality through reductions in ammonia and nitrogen oxide (NOx) emissions;
- Water quality improvements through dry manure handling;
- Water savings due to the elimination or reduction in flushing manure from barns;
- Production of compost, a beneficial product that can substitute for expensive inputs such as bedding and mulch and generate an effective alternative to costly synthetic fertilizers.

The COWS Act fills an important gap in the farm conservation toolbox by supporting manure management practices that work on farms of all sizes, reducing methane and NOx, and helping boost the profitability of the dairy and livestock sector.

Endorsed by California Dairies, California Dairy Campaign, Environmental Working Group, National Farmers Union, National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition, Milk Producers Council, and the National Milk Producers Federation.

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