

December 23, 2020

California Air Resources Board  
1001 I Street  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**Re: Tier 2 Pathway Application: Application No. B0127**

To Whom It May Concern,

The undersigned organizations write in opposition to this dairy waste to energy project proposed by Calgren Dairy Fuels, LLC: (1) the project will increase and/or sustain air pollution and threats to water quality in the locality and region from these related dairy CAFOs, thus undermining universal climate, environmental justice, and equity goals which are also legislated in California, (2) this project will actually incentivize the production of methane, and (3) the project will contribute to methane leakage from transport of gas.

Environmental Issues with these Dairy CAFOs are Unaddressed

It is generally accepted that CAFOs contribute to both local and regional environmental problems such as nuisance and local air quality issues plus nutrient runoff that pollutes local streams and rivers. CARB must verify that each applicant is conforming with all mandated environmental requirements prior to approving any application and must incorporate reporting procedures that ensure ongoing compliance with legal mandates.

Incentivized Production of Methane

This project and similar projects do not just undermine California's climate and environmental justice goals, but actually incentivize increased production of methane (and the concomitant pollution that accompanies methane production). To the extent that dairies are making manure and waste management decisions to increase methane production – such as increasing herd size to increase, in whole or in part, manure production, opting out of solid separation to increase methane, sometimes taking in food wastes for digestion, and even opting for liquefied manure management instead of methods that prevent production of methane in the first place – they should not reap the benefits of the LFCS program, designed to reduce greenhouse gases, instead of incentivizing production thereof.

The Life Cycle Assessment (LCA) fails to account for alternatives to dairy manure management. These industrialized dairy operations are not forced to have liquid manure lagoons underneath the barns. Dry manure handling and placing animals on pasture can both reduce methane emissions. This project does not even propose to collect methane from all of the lagoons. The methane released to the air by this operation must offset any methane collected and accounted for in the LCA.

The LCA must look at the totality of the methane released by these dairies. Not all of the lagoons are covered and collecting methane. From the lagoons which are covered, not all of the methane is collected. The additional methane emissions and other GHG emissions associated with these dairies must be calculated and applied as an offset towards the collected methane.

The project will either maintain or increase current levels of methane leakage

The use of this dairy manure gas as a negative carbon transportation fuel appears to be directly against California's GHG reduction goals. This and other similar LCFS projects forces California to accept fossil fuel based natural gas vehicles for the indefinite future as a replacement for diesel vehicles. The infrastructure of pipelines and natural gas fueling stations will be expanded because of projects like this and delay the transition to a fully electrified and zero emission energy system. Leakage of methane is abundant throughout the natural gas system from production to pipelines to trucking to end use.

It should be obvious that the use of fossil fuel in internal combustion engines designed for transportation is not part of California's future. This contradiction must be explained.

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In conclusion, this project should be denied because it will harm air quality, threaten water quality, and fails to consider the full lifecycle emissions of methane production from the dairies. Approving this application will directly subsidize the ongoing pollution of lower income communities in Tulare County and throughout the San Joaquin Valley. Furthermore, there is inadequate data to determine the extent to which the project will reduce greenhouse gas emissions and fails to take into consideration how the project will incentivize production and emission of greenhouse gases. Unless and until there is publicly available and verifiable data demonstrating that this project will not produce negative local air and water impacts, and the extent to which this project will actually reduce greenhouse gas emissions that could not otherwise be reduced by other means, CARB must deny this application.

Sincerely,

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