

Changes in livestock

In South Africa, beef production is a significant contributor to greenhouse gas emissions. This is because the digestive systems of ruminants emit methane through enteric fermentation. In 2006 there were approximately 0.8 million commercial dairy cattle in South Africa.¹

The *changes to livestock* Lever reduces the amount of dairy cows, and hence of fermentation. Dairy cow production might be reduced by a change in lifestyles by a shift from cow's milk to alternative milk products, from grains, beans or goat (who emit lower levels of methane). This lever is not a mitigation option as such, but it does describe how changes in lifestyle might affect emissions.

Level 1

Level 1 assumes that the demand for cow's dairy products is much as it is today and as the population grows the number of commercial dairy cattle grows from 0,8 million in 2006 to 1.4 million by 2050.

Level 2

Level 2 assumes that that cow's dairy products become less popular and that the number of commercial dairy cattle grows from 0,8 million in 2006 to 1.3 million by 2050.

Level 3

Level 3 assumes that people continue to shift their consumption away from cow's dairy products. The number of commercial dairy cattle grows from 0,8 million in 2006 to 1.2 million by 2050.

Level 4

Level 4 assumes that as a result of a reduced demand for cow's dairy products the number of commercial dairy cattle grows from 0,8 million in 2006 to 1.1 million by 2050, at a relatively slow rate of growth compared with population growth.



Source: Farmer's weekly

¹DAFF (2013) Agricultural abstract