

California Air Resources Board Rice Cultivation Projects Compliance Offsets Protocol

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California is poised to approve the first crop-based protocol for the state's pioneering emissions trading system. This protocol will allow U.S. rice farmers to generate offsets to sell in California's carbon market, providing a new source of revenue for growers while contributing to the state's clean air goals.

The new protocol is important because:

- The program rewards rice farmers for implementing a set of practical approaches that reduce emissions.
- Rice farmers can generate a new revenue stream through carbon credits without impacting their yield.
- Important wetland habitat will be maintained for wildlife and bird populations.

Why rice?

- Rice is one of California's largest crops and contributes more than \$5 billion a year and 25,000 jobs to the state's economy.
- The science on the carbon and nitrogen cycle of rice is well established.
- Rice cultivation emits methane, a potent greenhouse gas.
- Rice farmers have long been at the forefront of innovative farming practices that promote sustainability.

How does it work?

- Farmers can volunteer to implement one of three methods included in the protocol: dry seeding, early drainage, or alternate wetting and drying.
- Dry seeding is the practice of sowing dry seeds rather than aerially applying pre-germinated seeds.



One of the eligible practices - dry seeding

- Early drainage refers to draining the field seven to 10 days earlier than usual.
- Alternate wetting and drying is the practice of periodically flooding and then drying down a field throughout the growing season.

What are the rules?

- Interested rice producers will provide historical information to create a baseline. Then producers will submit records collected throughout a growing season to quantify the amount of methane emissions reduced by undertaking one or more of the three management practices on their land.

How is this protocol unique?

- This is the first protocol to measure GHG reductions from crop-based agriculture.
- The emissions reductions are quantified yearly, based on weather and a producer's management decisions.
- The emissions reductions are permanent and never have a chance of being re-released into the atmosphere.