



AGRICULTURE ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM

The West Virginia Conservation Agency and the Eastern Panhandle Conservation District are now taking applications for the Agriculture Enhancement Program. The purpose of the program is to increase farm productivity by conserving soil and making wise use of agricultural resources and improving water quality by offering technical and cost-share assistance as an incentive to implement best management practices.

The following practices are available for cost share:

Poultry Litter-cost share rate \$15 per ton-limit is 2 ton per acre for 50 acres. Current soil test needed.

Lime for Cropland-cost share is 50% not to exceed \$15 per ton for 50 acres. Current soil test needed.

Cover Crops-cost share rates are as follows: \$60 by October 5th (drilled)
\$45 by October 5th (broadcast)
\$35 by October 25th (drilled)
\$25 by October 25th (broadcast)

Stream Protection-included fencing, watering systems, stream crossing, and riparian buffers. This cost share will follow NRCS 2009 EQIP rates.



Any landowner that is interested in participating in this pilot program should contact the Eastern Panhandle Conservation District at 304-263-4376. Applications will be accepted from **February 17th through April 15th**. Applicants limited up to 50 acres per practice.

New Rules In the Works for Animal Agriculture in West Virginia

The US Environmental Protection Agency has completed rules to cover animal agriculture farms whose operations confine those animals, creating a potential point source of pollution. These rules will now be considered for inclusion in state code by the West Virginia Legislature during the upcoming 2010 session.

The rules, when adopted through rule making process, will become part of the West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection (WVDEP) National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit program dealing with Confined Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs), placing certain farms under regulations that will protect surface water from impairments such as nutrients, sediment and other potential pollutants associated with animal agriculture. Many states have had these regulations in place for several years and many have even more restrictive laws than the one being proposed in the West Virginia Legislature where WVDEP is proposing rules based on the basic federal provisions.

Any farm raising animals could be affected by this legislation. Some farms will be considered “CAFOs” due to the number of animals in confinement while others could be required to obtain the permit regardless of the number of animals on the farm. Small producers deemed to be contributing to water quality degradation due to one or more factors such as the proximity of animals to a stream, if a stream runs through the area where animals are confined and/or if a man made drainage goes through the containment lot and discharges into a stream are a few examples of where a farm could be required to obtain a permit.

The definitions of what an “Animal Feeding Operation” and “Confined Animal Feeding Operation”, as stated in the proposed state code change, are as follows.

“Animal feeding operation” (AFO) means a lot or facility, other than an aquatic animal production facility, where the following conditions are met:

Animals other than aquatic animals have been, are or will be stabled or confined and fed or maintained for a total of forty-five (45) days or more in any twelve (12) month period, and crops, vegetation, forage growth, or post-harvest residues are not sustained in the normal growing season over any portion of the lot or facility.

“Concentrated animal feeding operation” (CAFO) means an AFO that **Continued onto page 2.**

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Inside this issue:

Equipment Rental	2
50% Lime Cost Share	2
Cont. New Rules in Works for Agriculture	2
Schedule of Events	3
Outreach and Education	3
Widmyer Project	3

Agency Programs

Equipment Rental

NO TILL DRILL

- \$10.00 Per Acre

GREAT PLAINS DRILL

- \$10.00 Per Acre

POULTRY LITTER OR LIME SPREADER

- \$80.00 per day

**There is a \$50.00 delivery fee for all equipment.

Other Services

FORAGE TESTING

- 60/40% cost share

SOIL TESTING

- 50/50% cost share

Lime Incentive Program Criteria

EPCD will cost share up to 50% on bulk lime and delivery with a cap of \$30 per ton. Landowner is responsible for 100% of spreading cost.

- Fields must be hay and/or pasture.
- Applications approved are up to 50 acres per year and with a pH of 6.5 and below.
- Landowner is required to use a WV AG Certified Lime Dealer.
- After signing the Contract, the landowner has 90 days to spread the lime, if the landowner is unable to spread due to weather or other complications.
- When lime is delivered, have the vendor fill out and sign the Lime Invoice with the cost of the lime and delivery.
- If the EPCD pays the landowner over \$600.00, we will need the **Social Security or Tax I.D number to complete a 1099 Tax form.**

Continued: New Rules In the Works for Animal Agriculture in West Virginia

is defined or designated as a Large CAFO or as a Medium CAFO by the terms of this rule. Two or more AFOs under common ownership are considered to be a single AFO for the purposes of determining the number of animals at an operation if they adjoin each other or if they use a common area or system for the disposal of wastes.

When considering the definition of an “AFO” no matter what the farm size, determining if a farm is a “CAFO”, will be the responsibility of WVDEP. If they make the determination a farm has an “AFO” the WVDEP could deem the operation a “CAFO” and require permit coverage. Producers need to be aware that certain practices, such as winter feeding near streams or having animals confined where they have access to streams, are things that could require a permit but by making changes such as where and for how long the animals are confined and by implementing the use of management practices to eliminate water quality degradation the farm could prevent being designated an “AFO” and “CAFO”.

One note on pasture based operations where animal have stream access, these are not considered “AFOs” at the present time but, WVDEP may assess the situation and if it is decided there is a water quality degradation issue created by the animals, a violation notice will be issued and measures must be take to eliminate the problem.

Farms that are determined to be “CAFOs” will be required to apply for a permit which will be published for public notice, pay a permit fee, keep certain records, have a nutrient management plan, install or follow practices to reduce or eliminate water pollution and be open for inspection by WVDEP.

The West Virginia Department of Agriculture has partnered with the WV Conservation Agency, US Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service, WVU Extension and WV Farm Bureau and training has been provided to staff to assist farmers with information and advice on this proposed rule. If you have questions regarding the legislation contact you local USDA, WVU Extension or Conservation District office. These agencies are also available to make presentations about the permit program to interested groups.

The entire legislative rule change can be found on the WVDEP web site. It is under 47CSR-10 NPDES Rule, Title 47, Legislative Rule DEP Water Resources, Series 10 of the NPDES Program under Special NPDES Programs.

District Happenings

Schedule of Events

March 1-Deadline for College Scholarship Applications

March 9-10 Appalachian Grazing Conference

April 16-17 EPCD Tree Sale

District Board Meetings:

March 17; 7:00 pm

April 21; 7:00 pm

May 19; 7:00 pm

June 16; 7:00 pm

The District will be closed for the following Holidays:

Primary Election- May 11

Memorial Day-May 31

WV Day-June 21

EPCD Outreach and Education Programs

The following is a summarized list of outreach/education programs offered through the EPCD. If you would like more information, please contact the office @ 263 - 4376 x116.

Envirothon Contest: ages 15 – 18

Land Judging Contest: ages 15 – 18

Forestry Contest: ages 15 – 18

Grassland Evaluation Contest: ages 15 – 18

College Scholarships: high school seniors

Samara Program: 7th grade

Poster Contest: K through 12

Photo Contest: all ages

Stewardship Program: church youth through adult

Conservation & Forestry Camps: ages 11– 18

Annual Tree Sale

Adult Trainings & Workshops

In addition, District staff is available to address your classroom, group or organization of any age, to discuss various environmental topics or current programs.

Widmyer Wetlands Restoration and Environmental Study Area



A wetland restoration took place at Widmyer Elementary School in Morgan County thanks to a \$20,000 grant given to the Eastern Panhandle Conservation District (EPCD) by the West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection (WV DEP). Some of the money was used to purchase trees and shrubs native to Morgan County.

Fifty trees and shrubs were planted on Monday, December 14 by Berkeley Springs High School students enrolled in the vocational agriculture course who joined forces with volunteers from the community and area cooperating agency staff. The trees and shrubs were then caged in wire to protect the new plants from hungry deer living in the area.

The Education Outreach Specialist for the EPCD and author of the grant, provided oversight for the planting project. She plans to lead environmental education programs on site for the local schools.

In addition to opportunities for environmental education, the wetland and vegetative plantings will serve to filter pollutants before they are able to reach Warm Springs Run. It will also slow down storm water to prevent further erosion of the stream banks and to reduce potential flooding. Wetlands also serve to restore groundwater reserves.

Frogs have already moved into their new home where the vegetative plantings have been chosen to provide shelter and food for wildlife living in and around the wetland area.



**EASTERN PANHANDLE
CONSERVATION DISTRICT**

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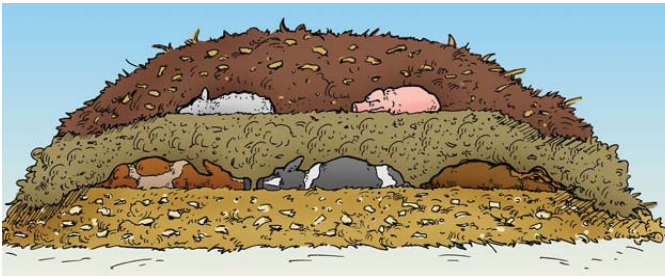
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Morgan counties***

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Non-Profit Org.
U. S. Postage Paid
Martinsburg, WV 25404
Permit #03

2010 Tree Order Form Inside

Sign up NOW for Large Animal Mortality Composting Workshop on March 17



After February 28, 2009 *Valley Proteins* no longer pickup or receive cattle for rendering. According to the *National Magazine of Rendering* , “On Friday, April 25, 2008, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) published a final rule that tightens restrictions on certain ruminant materials, disallowing brains and spinal cords from cattle over 30 months of age from all animal feed. This leaves many farmers in a dilemma as to what to do with animals that are euthanized or die on the farm. With the upcoming Bay TMDL and CAFO rules this will be a greater concern and will impact the agriculture community.

The Eastern Panhandle Conservation District is planning a **LARGE ANIMAL MORTALITY COMPOSTING WORKSHOP** to be held March 17, 2010 in Berkeley County.

Presenters from Cornell University will provide a full day of information on mortality composting discussing:

- health & safety issues
- pathogen destruction
- sighting of an operation
- successful large and small scale mortality composting
- the science and engineering behind the process end use and quality of finished compost

RSVP date March12, 2010

For more information please contact Barbie Elliott at 304.263.4376 or belliot@wvca.us An excellent website with a great deal of information can be found through Cornell University at: <http://cwmi.css.cornell.edu/composting.htm>