

### **Snyder County Farmers Learn How to Write Manure Management Plans from Conservation District**

The Snyder County Conservation District (SCCD) held two manure management plan writing workshops so farmers can write their own manure management plans. Both workshops were held on February 26, 2013, at the SCCD office. A total of twenty-nine farmers attended.

Barry Spangler, SCCD Agricultural Conservation Technician, gave an overview of the new Manure Management Manual and other agricultural environmental regulations. He also gave a step by step process of how farmers can write their manure management plans (MMPs) that meet these new regulations.



*Above: Local farmers listen on how to write their own MMPs to meet environmental regulations. Soil test results, farm maps and information learned at the workshop, to complete their MMPs at their farms.*

**Every farm that produces or land applies manure, regardless of size, is required to have and follow a written manure management plan (MMP).** This includes manure spreading on fields from equipment and grazing animals on pastures and in ACAs, such as barnyards, bare spots in pastures, etc. **These regulations also affect people who own one horse, one goat, one pig or one steer.**



The Manure Management Manual, published in October 2011 by PA Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), supplies information about new rules regarding the following:

- Manure application (from manure spreaders) rates, timing and no-spread zones
- Pasture management
- Animal concentrated areas (ACAs), such as barnyards, pasture bare spots, etc.
- Record keeping: manure application, manure imports and exports, crop yields, manure storage maintenance

The Manure Management Manual also contains a manure management plan (MMP) in a workbook format. The MMP can be completed by the farmer. Manure application charts for the major agronomic crops and livestock species are also inside the Manure Management Manual.

*Note: Farmers with large numbers of animals or a large animal density in relation to farmland managed may be required to have a more details nutrient management plan (NMP) written by a certified nutrient management specialist who commercially writes these plans.*

The Conservation District is also offering the following services for farmers:

- Informational workshops explaining the Manure Management Manual and its contents to non-traditional livestock, horse and small operations.
- Assist farmers with writing portions of their MMPs.
- Write the MMPs based on information supplied by the farmers (if time permits).
- Supply farmers with maps.
- With assistance from the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), help farmers with ACA issues.

Spangler also gave information about the new state agricultural erosion & sedimentation (E&S) plan requirements already in effect. (For instance, a cover crop is required after corn silage harvest in fields within 100 ft. from a streambank's edge.) Most farmers refer these plans as "conservation plans." Farmers can write these plans or ask NRCS (Middleburg Field Office: 570-837-0007, extension 3) to be placed on a waiting list to have conservation plans written to meet PA regulations.

**Farmers are required to have MMPs (or NMPs) and conservation (or agricultural E&S) plans up-to-date according to PA regulations, followed, records kept and have these plans and records on the farm. The sooner a farmer can get this accomplished, the better.**

Questions or comments about MMPs, NMPs or services and programs related to it should be forwarded to the Conservation District at (570) 837-3000.

*Note: These workshops are sponsored in part by a Growing Greener grant through the PA Department of Environmental Protection.*

Version: 3-14-2013

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