

Farmers Learn How to Write Their Own Manure Management Plans from Conservation District

The Snyder County Conservation District (SCCD) held a manure management plan (MMP) writing workshop so that farmers, farm owners, livestock and equine owners can write their own MMPs. The meeting was held at the SCCD office on March 21, 2019. Five (5) people, four (4) of them farmers, attended the workshop.

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



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 (animal concentrated areas), 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 offers the following services for farmers:

- Assist farmers with writing portions of their MMPs.
- Supply farmers with maps. (Maps can also be secured at the USDA office at 401 & 405 West Market Street, Middleburg.)
- With assistance from the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), help farmers with ideas on how to improve ACAs or other issues.
- Whenever possible, assist farmers in trying to secure financial assistance for needed BMPs.

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.) Some farmers refer these plans as "conservation plans." Farmers can either:

- a.) Write their Ag. E&S plans for their farms on their own by utilizing PAOneStop, a website available from Penn State,
- b.) Ask the Conservation District whether any staff member can help the farmer complete their Ag. E&S plans they started,
- c.) Ask the Conservation District whether any of its staff members can write Ag. E&S plans for their operation if time permits, or
- d.) 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 #1: Financial support for this project is provided by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) through the Chesapeake Bay Implementation Grant, the Clean Water Fund and the Chesapeake Bay Regulatory and Accountability Program (CBRAP).

Note #2: PAOneStop web links: www.paonestop.org or www.paonestop.psu.edu.

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