



Title: A Guidebook for Livestock Producers Interested in Implementing an EMS

Name: Jill Heemstra

Email: jheemstra@unl.edu

Organization: University of Nebraska-Lincoln

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Theme: Pollution Assessment and Prevention

Situation: Interest in Environmental Management Systems (EMS's) and their application to livestock operations is growing. The EMS process is fairly straightforward but can be daunting at first glance. A guidebook, based on the ISO 14001 standard, and utilizing a step-by-step approach to the process was developed and pilot tested with dairy cattle, poultry and beef cattle producers.

Objectives: One of the overall Partners for Livestock EMS project objectives is to develop environmental management tools and procedures that can best assist a wide variety of livestock producers to implement an EMS. Realizing that producers will have widely varying reasons for implementing EMS's, expect different outcomes, and require different levels of formality, the guidebook is meant to be a flexible template that assists in designing a functional EMS.

Methods: The guidebook was developed as an implementation guide that utilizes livestock-specific language and examples. The EMS described in the guidebook utilizes ISO 14001 as a base reference, but allows for less formality in some areas, depending on the producer's goals. Input from project team members, expert reviewers, and guests at an annual project team meeting was incorporated into a draft version of the guidebook and distributed to each of nine pilot states. Many of the pilot teams modified the materials to fit their target audiences and intended delivery methods. Results of the project evaluation process and individual experiences of the pilot team members will be utilized in the development of the finalized version of the guidebook.

Partnerships: The project includes Research and Extension partners in 10 states (NE, IA, MT, TX, ID, NY, WI, GA, PA, VA). The advisory committees for the national project team as well as stakeholder groups for each individual state project include producers and representatives of farm organizations, environmental groups, state and federal agencies, and land grant universities.

Research: The materials are being used in educating pilot participants (producers) about EMS implementation. Outreach to a wide variety of stakeholders was accomplished through the development of advisory and stakeholder committees. Information learned from the research and evaluation components of the Partners for LEMS project will be utilized in assembling the finalized guidebook.

Resources: This project has been funded through a USDA Initiative for Future Agriculture and Food Systems Grant, and additionally supported by the Environmental Protection Agency Non-Point Source Control Branch, and the USDA/NRCS, as well as by states through cooperating Extension educators.

Results: A finalized version of the guidebook will be made available through publication by a state Cooperative Extension Service or similar venue.



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