



Title: Evaluation of Livestock Environmental Management System Pilot Projects

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Organization: University of Wisconsin - Madison

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Theme: Pollution Assessment and Prevention

Situation: Globally, industries are getting on board to meet the International Standard for Environmental Management Systems (ISO 14001). Increasingly, U.S. governmental agencies are promoting this standard to encourage firms to meet and exceed regulatory compliance. Are formal Environmental Management Systems (EMSs) useful to farmers and helpful to improve farm environmental protection? Partnerships for Livestock EMS, a USDA/IFAFS project, has been exploring whether and how the development of an EMS can be useful to improve environmental performance of livestock operations.

Objectives: Objectives are to determine the following: 1. How can the EMS framework best fit diverse livestock producers' needs and constraints, and integrate with business management? The project includes three state pilot projects each for dairy, beef and poultry producers. 2. What sort of educational interventions are most productive and amenable to livestock producers to induce EMS adoption? 3. What are the barriers to successful EMS implementation, and what incentives might be required? 4. What conditions do the EMSs need to meet to satisfy diverse stakeholder agendas?

Methods: The LEMS project evaluation is investigating the merits of each pilot state's approach to developing and implementing EMSs. Research methods include online and paper surveys of producers, stakeholders, and project team members tailored to gather information about their interaction with the EMS project. By fall of 2004, evaluation data will include interviews and document reviews to produce a robust understanding of the pros and cons of each state's approach. The UW-Madison LEAD Center is conducting the evaluation on contract with the Farm & Home Environmental Management Program.

Partnerships: The project includes Research and Extension partners in nine pilot states addressing beef (IA, MT, TX), dairy (ID, NY, WI) and poultry producers (GA, PA, VA). Partners include both national and state producer and environmental organizations, and government agencies.

Research: The project entails research on EMS applications to livestock producers and state agricultural research stations, and best practices for Environmental Management System education (including systematic evaluation of on-farm education practices, Extension program strategy, and interactive educational materials development); direct education of farmers implementing an EMS; and outreach to state agency, farm organization, environmental organization and other partners to explore how an EMS program might integrate and satisfy their many and sometimes conflicting goals.

Resources: This project has been funded through a USDA Initiative for Future Agriculture and Food Systems (IFAFS) Grant, and additionally supported by the Environmental Protection Agency Non-Point Source Control Branch, and the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service.

Results: The summative evaluation will report preliminary results of farmer, stakeholder, and educator surveys. The evaluation has been formative as well, with results presented to state teams and incorporated into their ongoing educational procedures and policy recommendations. Results will be distributed widely through journals, newsletters, publication on the Internet, and official project reports. The intention is to inform educators and policy makers as to the appropriate uses of the EMS approach in agriculture and their potential value for achieving environmental protection.



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