



Title: Heartland Integrated Water Quality Coordination Initiative

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Organization: Iowa State University

State: IA **Region:** Heartland

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Theme: Manure Management, Nutrient and Pesticide Management, Watershed Management, U.S. EPA Region 7 and Coordination

Situation: In the Midwest, water quality and quantity problems are frequently linked to agriculture. Common priority issues are nutrient and pest management, animal manure management and citizens' involvement in watershed management. The Cooperative State Research, Education and Extension Service has provided resources for interstate regional coordination of university and agency programs to help clients and stakeholders address these issues.

Objectives: The Heartland Regional Water Quality Coordination Initiative is collaboration among Iowa State University, Kansas State University, the University of Missouri, the University of Nebraska, and Region 7 of the U.S. EPA. The objective of the initiative is to strengthen multi-state and interagency partnerships that make research-based information, education and extension resources of the land grant universities more accessible to federal, state and local water quality improvement efforts in the region.

Methods: Workshops and Web-based resources on manure and nutrient/pest management themes address research, education and issue analysis questions raised by broad-based regional steering committees. An on-line newsletter <www.iowabeefcenter.org/heartlandwq/newsletter/archive.htm> provides information to assist states in implementing CAFO rules. An interstate group of community development specialists is drawing together resources for citizens involved in watershed management. The IDEA communications service at ISU is creating project publications and Web-based reporting systems.

Partnerships: Theme steering committees involve state ag and natural resource agencies, NRCS, U.S. EPA and university specialists. Committees meet or teleconference monthly; members assist in identifying target audiences and in planning and prioritizing theme activities, including Web site and workshop content.

Research: Steering committees were established to ensure that water quality theme activities respond to the regional issues. Theme leaders and staff identify relevant research, technical and educational program resources related to the needs expressed by their stakeholders. They present these resources through their steering committee members, workshops, Web sites and other appropriate means. The regional coordination program does not conduct research directly; however, steering committees are generating both ideas and interstate partnerships for a range of needed applied research.

Resources: The time and effort invested by steering committee members is the pre-eminent resource leveraged by the project. Professional staff of EPA R7 regularly participates, and the regional office also contributes meeting facilities. Theme Web pages are within existing sites supported by collaborating universities.

Results: A regional workshop and monthly on-line newsletter have provided CAFO information and perspectives to research, technical and regulatory personnel. Manure and nutrient management Web sites maintain targeted literature summaries. CAFO workshop participants and nutrient/pest management steering committee members value the regional communication opportunities and have requested additional workshops and issues analysis. A Heartland poster and regional Web site were available at the end of the first project quarter.



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