



USDA-CSREES 2006 National Water Quality Conference

Bringing Environmental Management Systems (EMS) to an Agricultural Audience

A project titled “Partners for Livestock Environmental Management Assessment Systems” (<http://www.uwex.edu/AgEMS/>) explored the application of EMS to agricultural operations. Early in the project, educators recognized the need for guidance materials with terminology and examples directly related to issues faced in the daily operation of farms and ranches. After review, pilot testing with over 200 producers in nine states, and revision, the materials are being published as a new module in the Livestock and Poultry Environmental Stewardship (LPES) Curriculum (<http://www.lpes.org>). The module includes six pieces, each with a distinct use and audience. They include 1) Agricultural EMS Introduction-for anyone interested in learning the basics about EMS and its application to agriculture 2) EMS Supplement-contains information for advisors or EMS “coaches” as well as handouts 3) My EMS Workbook-for agricultural producers to summarize their plan 4) My EMS Fact Sheets-for agricultural producers to read as they work through the My EMS workbook 5) Sample Record Keeping forms-for advisors and producers to review and select templates that can be modified and utilized in the farm or ranch record keeping 6) Example of the My EMS workbook completed for a beef feedlot. The materials are being made available in both a printer-friendly format and in a file type that can be opened on most computers and modified to meet the needs of a specific audience or program. The materials provide information and procedures that are consistent with the international environmental management system standard, ISO 14001. They are intended to support producers in being proactive in identifying and addressing environmental risks in their production systems.

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