



## **USDA-CSREES 2006 National Water Quality Conference**

### **Technical Service Provider Training Program in Florida**

In collaboration with the USDA-NRCS, the University of Florida is providing training for Technical Service Providers (TSPs), specifically in Nutrient Management & Land Treatment Practice Elements. Over the past 4 years, the program has completed a total of eight training sessions at different locations in north and south Florida.

The total number of students trained through this project to date is 182. The participants included personnel from various state agencies and private industry/consulting firms including Certified Crop Advisers. Topics typically covered at these trainings include- the Policies, Planning Process & Certifications, CAFO/AFO regulations, Soils of Florida, Using a Soil Survey, Manure, Soil and Plant Tissue Diagnostic Testing, Animal Manures & Wastewaters, Nutrient Management Plan & Land Treatment Practices, Bio-Security, the Phosphorus Index, Nutrient Movement & Losses, Municipal Wastes and Trace Elements, the Florida Dairy Business, Feed Management, AFOPro & Manure Manager. Each student is provided with a course notebook consisting of presentations, notes and reference materials, a workbook with exercises and forms for the Nutrient Management plan, and a CD-ROM with electronic copies of the presentations and a more comprehensive reference section. Field visits to local dairies provide the hands-on Practicum part of the training. The importance of site specific analysis of soil characteristics, management practices followed, resources available, economical sustainability along with environmental safeguards are emphasized and demonstrated during the field trip. Overall program ratings at the end of the trainings showed an average rating of 4.8 out of 5 for the instructors and 4.6 out of 5 for the program and the knowledge gain ranged between +20% and +48% with an average of 29%. The training sessions typically receive up to 15 CEUs in Nutrient Management, Soil and Water Management, and Crop Management.

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