



USDA-CSREES 2006 National Water Quality Conference

P-Indices: A Southern Comparison

In order to meet USDA-NRCS 590 Standards, each state had a choice of methodology to deal with animal waste application and excess phosphorus (P). The choices were to: 1) set P soil-test threshold, 2) set an environmental threshold, or 3) develop a P Index. The majority of states chose to develop a P Index. Through a USDA-CSREES Southern region project, the nutrient management workgroup has been comparing P-Indices. The states involved are Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, New Mexico, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Texas. These states represent a diversity of agroecological regions; in addition, development of P-Indices had different philosophical and scientific basis depending on the state. Some states developed a more quantitative P-Indices, while other states used a qualitative approach. Results show dramatically different ratings between P-Indices for the same set of conditions, but in general the ratings are similar when P-Indices had a similar basis. Scenarios will be outlined and ratings reported for the different states' P-Indices.

Author: Deanna Osmond

Coauthor(s): M. Cabrera, S. Feagley, G. Hardy, C. Mitchell, R. Mylavarapu, P. Moore, L. Oldham, B. Thom, M. Stephens, F. Walker, and H. Zhang.