



USDA-CSREES 2006 National Water Quality Conference

[Nitrogen and Phosphorus Budgets for Regional Nutrient Management Planning](#)

The Mid-Atlantic Water Quality project team has developed state and county phosphorus nutrient input/output budgets for the five states cooperating in the project, and has developed a Web site (www.mawaterquality.org) and educational materials to awaken farmer, public, and policymaker awareness to regional nutrient imbalances. Nitrogen nutrient budgets will soon become available by state and county, and both types of nutrient budgets will be able to be displayed by physiographic region and major watershed. Nitrogen inputs to and outputs from soil systems are more complex than phosphorus inputs and outputs. Nitrogen input pathways include atmospheric deposition, irrigation water, chemical fertilizer, manures, biosolids, and other organic materials. Many such input pathways are undocumented. Nitrogen output pathways include crop uptake, atmospheric release or volatilization, leaching or subsurface flows, surface runoff and erosion. These output pathways are even less documented than input pathways. Strengths and weaknesses of the methods used to develop the interactive Web site and printed educational materials are discussed with respect to water quality education programming.

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