



USDA-CSREES 2007 National Water Quality Conference

Implementation of a National Feed Management Education Program and Assessment Tools

In 2006, a Feed Management Education Project was implemented. The project is national in scope and funded by the USDA - Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Conservation Innovation Grant program. The project is designed to encourage adoption of the NRCS Feed Management Conservation Practice Standard (CPS 592), and feed management practices that can have a positive impact on soil, water, and air quality. A goal of the project is to assist NRCS staff and agricultural professionals increase their understanding of Feed Management, its impacts on environmental sustainability of livestock and poultry operations, and inclusion of a Feed Management Plan (FMP) as part of a comprehensive nutrient management plan (CNMP). The Feed Management curriculum is organized in a four-hour format for both technical service providers and nutrition consultants. Follow-up on-line training is designed to provide more intensive training of electronic decision aid tools. Information is provided that links the FMP to the CNMP and the requirements for certification to write a feed management plan. Real farm case studies are used to provide training in use of on-farm assessment checklists for assessing the opportunity of a Feed Management Plan to impact whole farm nutrient balance; and, develop and implement a FMP. Electronic decision aid tools include: whole farm balance, manure excretion estimator, and the relative economics of a ration change vs. transporting manure. Species specific and practice specific fact sheets are provided to assist with evaluating the relative merit of feed management practices listed in the on-farm assessment checklists. Examples of a FMP template are provided, as well as a completed FMP.

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