



USDA-CSREES 2007 National Water Quality Conference

Livestock on Small Acreages: Protecting Water Resources and Health

The University of Rhode Island Cooperative Extension (URI CE) Water Quality and 4-H Programs received funding in 2006 from the National Integrated Water Quality Program to create an education program for small acreage livestock owners and managers focusing on pollution prevention best management practices (BMPs). This target audience is often ineligible for traditional agricultural assistance programs and their behaviors and decisions are often shaped by issues and concerns that are significantly different from those of commercial farmers. We have assembled a steering committee of partners and stakeholders consisting of federal, state and local agencies and organizations to participate in the development of this Program. We are conducting a needs assessment of this target audience to identify gaps in knowledge and existing barriers that limit or prevent the adoption of BMPs to protect water resources. We will develop a train-the-trainer education program, primarily working with 4-H volunteers, that increases knowledge about livestock pollution risks, adapts and transfers agricultural BMPs at a scale that is appropriate, and ultimately, increases the adoption of BMPs that protect water resources. An evaluation plan is being developed and administered throughout the program to ensure that specific objectives and desired outcomes are achieved. In addition to increasing target audience knowledge and adoption of BMPs, the education program will increase local and regional partnerships, provide educational resources and enhance training opportunities within the state 4-H Program. This poster will highlight the objectives, methods, evaluation plan, and outputs being developed and implemented by this Extension Education Program and summarize desired outcomes.

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