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Youth Livestock Environmental Assurance

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Abstract Text:

There is a growing need for environmental education within agricultural education curriculum. Forty-eight percent of respondents in a survey of Ohio livestock producers identified manure management as the greatest environmental challenge facing their operations. Student Livestock Environmental Assurance Program (Student-LEAP) has been created through the cooperative efforts of vocational agriculture teachers, the Ohio Livestock Coalition (OLC), Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR), Ohio Federation of Soil & Water Conservation Districts (SWCD), United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), Ohio EPA, and The Ohio State University Extension (OSUE). Best Management Practices (BMP) that minimize nutrient movement are highlighted. The 3 sections within the curriculum address general concept of environmental management. The following modules are included: Overall Site Evaluation, Understanding a CAFO; Broiler and Turkey Litter Management and Mortalities Disposal, Feedlot Management, Mortalities, and Egg Wash Water; Milking Center Wastewater Treatment; Silage Storage; Water management, liquid-solid separation. The module is comprised of a manual, slides, and video-based presentations that can be used by high school teachers. Student LEAP is designed to be an "off the shelf" teaching module that requires no additional materials to provide environmental education on livestock issues. Student LEAP has been distributed to over 300 high school educators in Ohio. Ninety-two percent of high school educators attending educational sessions on Student LEAP have requested a copy of the curriculum. Modules are available through the Ohio State University Curriculum Materials Service (cms@osu.edu). The primary goal is to produce a generation of highly qualified individuals who are prepared to work in fields that interface production agriculture with environmental issues related to manure management, air and water quality.

Impact Statement:

The Youth Livestock Environmental Assurance Program (Youth LEAP) education module has been distributed to over 300 high school educators in Ohio. Ninety-two percent of high school educators attending educational sessions on Youth LEAP have requested a copy of the curriculum. The Ohio Livestock Coalition, which is comprised of livestock commodity organizations in the state and Ohio Farm Bureau, are encouraging the creators of the module to develop a web-based program for adult audiences based on Youth LEAP. This will debut in the winter of 2007-2008.