



2008 USDA-CSREES National Water Conference  
Sparks, NV

## **Developing a Small Acreage Livestock Pollution Prevention Education Program in Rhode Island: Needs Assessment and Piloting Educational Materials**

Holly K. Burdett, Alyson McCann, Marcia Morreira, Katherine Petersson, Fred Launer, Heidi Wright, and Judith Swift

### **Abstract Text:**

The University of Rhode Island Cooperative Extension (URI CE) Water Quality and 4-H Programs received a three year National Integrated Water Quality Program Extension Education grant in September 2006 to create a train-the-trainer education program for small acreage livestock owners in Rhode Island. The education program will work primarily with URI 4-H volunteers and will focus on livestock pollution prevention best management practices (BMPs). This target audience is often ineligible for traditional agricultural assistance programs and their goals and conditions are often significantly different from those of large scale livestock operations.

The first year of this Program included: 1) establishing a steering committee of partners and stakeholders consisting of federal, state and local agencies and organizations, 2) conducting a needs assessment with the target audience to identify gaps in knowledge and existing barriers that limit or prevent the adoption of BMPs to protect water resources, 3) piloting an existing fact sheet and self-assessment series with URI freshman animal and veterinary science students to determine ease in use and to develop effective training tools, 4) developing a Program website and incorporating educational and outreach activities into existing events and outlets, 5) collaborating and sharing resources with the New England Region Water Quality Program and National Livestock and Poultry Environmental Learning Center. The first year of this Program has provided a strong framework for developing a train-the-trainer education program with 4-H volunteers that will include effective tools and message content to increase the adoption of livestock BMPs on small acreages.

This poster will highlight the needs assessment and preliminary 4-H volunteer outreach, student education, website development with assistance from the URI Department of Communications Studies, and other activities that have contributed to the foundation for developing an effective adoption-outreach education program for small acreage livestock owners in Rhode Island.

### **Impact Statement:**