

Water Quality Update

Newsletter of Extension Water Quality Programs

January 1999

\$\$ Show Me the Money \$\$



1999 Oklahoma Producer Grants

The Kerr Center for Sustainable Agriculture has announced availability of funds to innovative producers for 1999. The competitive grant program will fund up to \$3,500 for a one-year grant and up to a total of \$7,500 for a two or three-year grant. Proposals must focus on one of eight priority areas.

All proposals must be received by 5 p.m. on February 17, 1999. For more information, contact Alan Ware, Kerr Center, PO Box 588, Poteau, OK 74953, ph: 918-647-9123, fx: 918-647-8712, or email: aeware@kerrcenter.com.

1999 EPA Watershed Assistance Grants

EPA's Office of Wetlands, Oceans and Watersheds will award \$300,000 in grants ranging from \$2,000 to \$30,000 to local watershed partnerships to support organizational development and long term effectiveness. The grants will be distributed by River Network, a national organization based in Portland, OR. **Deadline is February 18, 1999.** To request an application, contact the River Network at <http://www.rivernet.org> or 503-241-3506.

1999 Office of Environmental Justice Grants

The goal of this EPA branch is to ensure that "no groups of people, including racial, ethnic, or socio-economic groups, should bear a disproportional share of the negative environmental impacts" associated with "development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations and policies." Funds to assist state and tribal governments, as well as community based/grassroots organizations in addressing these concerns are available through various programs. (**Earliest deadline is Feb. 26, 1999.**) For more information, call the EPA at 1-800-962-6215, or visit the website at <http://www.epa.gov/oeqa/oej/ejgrantf.html>. ♦

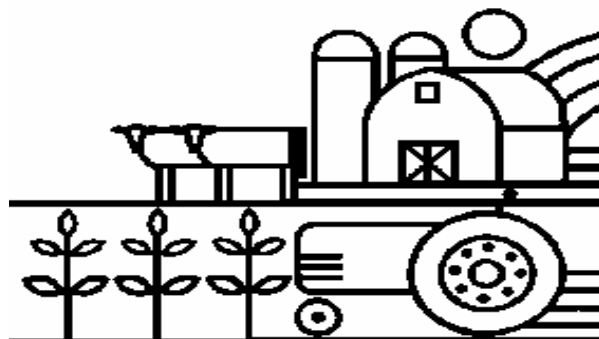
Insurance Rewards Farm*A*Syst

Northwestern Michigan is the scene of an important breakthrough in insurance coverage for local farmers. The Northwest Michigan Groundwater Stewardship Program (NMGSP) worked with the North Pointe Insurance Company (NPIC) of Michigan in the spring of 1997 to develop an insurance program that rewards farmers for clean water practices.

*NPIC investigated Farm*A*Syst and the goals of the NMGSP and concluded that Farm*A*Syst could be at the forefront of "preventive insurance." Farm*A*Syst enables farmers and ranchers to identify pollution risks from nitrates, microorganisms, and toxic chemicals by using a worksheet. Recognizing that correcting the problems identified by Farm*A*Syst would potentially lower the risk of costly insurance claims, NPIC decided to offer lower insurance premiums to farmers who participate in the program.*

So far, only NPIC is participating in the program, but others may soon buy in. According to Janet Person, of Michigan's Antrim Conservation District, "We would love to work with Farm Bureau...one of the largest insurers in the agricultural community...their support would give the program a real boost."♦

- From Nonpoint Source News-Notes, November 1998, Vol 54, pp. 14-15.



Poultry Waste Management Training Underway

Under Senate Bill 1170, the 1998 Oklahoma Legislature required registration of all poultry operations. A requirement of registration is that each operator receive 9 hours of education before July 1999 and three hours each year after that date. Initial funding for the education program will come from the poultry companies. Oklahoma Cooperative Extension from OSU was mandated to provide the curriculum and conduct the educational program.

According to Dr. Doug Hamilton with the OCES at OSU, approximately 1,300 people have already attended training meetings to obtain the first 6 hours. A team of County Extension Educators and Extension Specialists has developed the curriculum and delivered the program at sessions in Idabel, Poteau, Stigler, Stilwell, Jay, and Pryor. The final three hours will be delivered early in the spring at the same locations.

Included in the first 6 hours was a one-hour module covering the environmental background for poultry litter management. The module discussed the impact of phosphorus on water quality and presented research results concerning ways to reduce nitrogen and phosphorus in runoff. The Environmental Module can be viewed online from the Water Quality Home Page (<http://bioen.okstate.edu>) under Presentations.

The remaining 3 hours will cover the waste management plan, recordkeeping, litter marketing options, and conservation practices, including riparian area management. ♦

For more information on the Poultry Waste Education Program contact Dr. Doug Hamilton at (405) 744-7089 or dhamilt@okstate.edu.

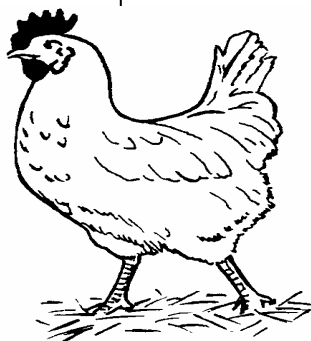
Chicken Nuggets

In the August 1998 issue of "Waterwise and Otherwise," Extension Water Quality Specialist Joe Bullard listed several interesting notes with regard to poultry and water quality.

- After one year of study at the Briggs Ranch east of Poteau, it seems that calculations for poultry litter application rates can be based on phosphorus content rather than nitrogen, without reducing productivity.

- Nutrient and water quality management may have another variable to consider. A Texas A&M study found higher nutrient content in smaller litter particles.

- Pioneer Hi-Bred Int'l, Inc. is developing a strain of corn low in phytic acid. This should make more phosphorus available to animals with only one stomach, including hogs, fish, and poultry. This could reduce the amount of sent in the animals' waste.



... many, in other samples brought to extension offices this spring, nitrogen content from broilers averaged about 60 lbs/ton while breeders and pullets averaged 40 lbs/ton. For phosphorus, both the broilers and breeders averaged 60 lbs/ton, while pullets registered only 46lbs/ton. ♦

For all the "poulticulars" see that issue or give Joe a call at 918-647-8231.

If you need a copy of any articles, contact Tori Riggs at (405) 744-5653 or rtori@okstate.edu.

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U.S. Water Quality News

A new law in **Maryland** will require agricultural producers and lawn care professionals to abide by the fertilization recommendations of the University of Maryland's Cooperative Extension Service (UMCES), or face fines of up to \$10,000.



Down on the farm.....

Brought about by the continuing concern over the health of Chesapeake Bay, the Water Quality Improvement Act (WQIA) of 1998 establishes a system of nutrient management planning and financial and technical assistance for farmers in Maryland. By December 31, 2002, all agricultural operations in the state with annual gross incomes in excess of \$2,500, or more than eight animal units (one animal unit equals 1,000 pounds), which use chemical fertilizers must implement a certified nutrient management plan for nitrogen and phosphorus. Farmers applying animal manure or sludge must develop nitrogen-based plans by December 31, 2001, and a nitrogen and phosphorus-based plan by July 1, 2004. All plans must be in place one year after these deadlines.

The law builds in many incentives aimed at helping farmers meet deadlines and requirements. UMCES consultants will be available to write nutrient management plans, and soil conservation districts will hire 15 new field personnel. Tax incentives up to \$4,500 and deductions for equipment purchases for poultry or livestock manure spreading will be offered to help farmers make the transition.

UMCES Fertilizer Recommendations

- **Apply no more than three times a year.**
- **Apply no more than 1 lb/1000 ft² at a time.**
- **Try to avoid pesticides completely.**

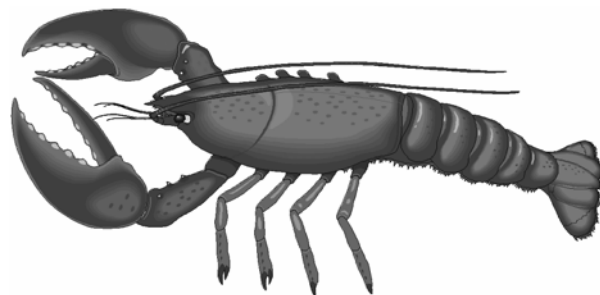
Fore! Water Quality.....

The new law also targets golf courses, athletic fields, and homes with large lots. It requires commercial applicators and lawn care companies that service nonagricultural or state-owned sites larger than three acres to apply nutrients in accordance with the recommendations of the UMCES. Unlike farmers, lawn care professionals will not be required to develop nutrient management plans.

Tom Delaney, executive vice president of the Professional Lawn Care Association of America (PLCAA), says this law will have little effect since most lawn care customers have less than three acres and only 15% of all lawns are treated by professionals. He believes improper fertilizer use by homeowners is more of a problem.

For more information on the WQIA or a summary of the Act's provisions, call the Maryland Department of Agriculture at 410-841-5863. ♦

- *From Nonpoint Source News-Notes, Nov. 1998, Vol 54, pp. 7-9.*



ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

Water Quality Programs
218 Ag Hall
Stillwater, OK 74078-6021

DATELINE

February 10, 1999 – 15th Annual Resource Management Conference – Urban Ecology: Protecting Tulsa Area Resources – Keynote speaker Bob Jennings of Oxley Nature Center – Topics include development planning, air quality, partners for wildlife, backyard habitat, Tulsa's Bus System, and urbanism and water quality, among others – Contact Tulsa County CD at 918-744-1595.

February 23, 1999 – 8am - Technical Transfer Seminar-Sponsored by EFO - Environmental Software/Internet Tools How-To's and How They Affect Public Education and Environmental Health and Safety – Center for International Trade Development Building, OSU, Stillwater, OK – Contact Jim Barnett or Dianna Collins at 405-272-9221.

March 24-26, 1999 – 8th Annual Symposium of the Oklahoma Clean Lakes Association - University of Oklahoma Biological Station – Kingston, OK – **Abstracts due February 1, 1999** – For more information contact Kendra Eddlemon – 405-979-2209 – keddlemon@ocwq.state.ok.us.

April 17-22, 1999 – Southern Region Water Quality/Waste Management Workshop: Working Toward Solutions- Raleigh Hotel Plaza – Raleigh, NC - Registration is \$100 before the **March 17, 1999 deadline**, \$150 after that date. Contact person is Bonnie Teater with the Southern Rural Development Center, Box 9656, Mississippi State University, MS 39762, ph: 601-325-3507. Rooms are reserved under the name of Southern Region Water Quality Conference for a single/double room rate of \$75.00 plus tax. Reservation **cut-off date is March 17, 1999**. Reservations should be made by calling the Raleigh Plaza Hotel at (919) 834-9900. *Applications and workshop programs will soon be made available through the OSU-OCES Water Quality Program Office.*