



CAFO CLEAN WATER ACT PERMIT UPDATE

At the CAFO work group meeting in Albany at the end of April the status of New York’s Clean Water Act (CWA) permit for animal agriculture was discussed. This permit, GP -0-09-002, was first released in draft in August 2008 then modified based on the EPA’s CAFO rule released in December 2008 and re-released in draft form by the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) in October 2009. This draft CWA permit has notification and public hearing language surrounding herd expansions greater than 20% or manure storage construction greater than 1 million gallons and requires a complete Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan to be submitted annually to the NYS DEC for review and posting for the general public. When asked on the timeframe for revisions to the CWA permit, the NYS DEC responded that the permit “was not even on the back burner now, it’s not even on the stove.” When questioned further on what to expect from the CWA permit, Jackie Lendrum commented that New York has been asked by the EPA to participate in a six state conversation about national policy regarding CAFO Clean Water Act permitting. The current DEC position is that they have a goal of releasing this CWA permit in New York by March 31, 2011.

The current position from ACS on this topic continues to be that no large size CAFO in New York needs to seek the Environmental Conservation Law (ECL) permit at this time. However, some specific farm situations, like the expansion of a medium to a large CAFO, would warrant seeking such coverage. All medium CAFOs in New York **should** be applying for the ECL permit now. Currently 7 of 143 large CAFOs in New York have filed a Notice of Intent for the ECL permit and “hundreds” of medium CAFO have applied for the ECL permit according to the NYS DEC. Please contact your Planner for advice about the best permit for your farm.

Submitted by Brian Boerman, ACS Planner

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

- The registration deadline for the Conservation Stewardship Program ends June 11, 2010. To register go to: http://www.ny.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/new_csp/index.html or contact your Service Manager
- The registration for the new round of EQIP Program funding runs from June 1—July 1, 2010. To register go to: <http://www.ny.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/eqip/eqip2010/index.html> or contact your Service Manager

NOTICE

The NYS DEC is conducting unannounced CAFO inspections on both large and mediums CAFOs farms in 2010. Please be sure that your manure spreading recommendations and related record-keeping is up-to-date and on file.

NOTICE: NYS DEC/EPA TO CONDUCT CAFO INSPECTIONS IN THE CHESAPEAKE BAY WATERSHED

According to the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), these agencies are set to inspect 20 New York CAFOs in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed over the next 3 years. The EPA plans to lead 6 inspections a year starting in May 2010 on facilities which have not been previously inspected. Farms will be given 2 weeks notice prior to inspection and are required to submit documentation and maps required in the annual CAFO update.

Submitted by Brian Boerman, ACS Planner

FIELDS & CROPS TIP

Planting? Then check out the Planting Worksheet in Fields and Crops. It can be run in Portrait or Landscape mode, along with a multitude of options from Write-in comments to Directions to the field.

WHERE ARE YOU PUTTING THAT WELL?

Did you know that uniform building code requires that well drillers place no new wells within 200 feet of agricultural land? According to New York State Agriculture & Markets attorney John Rusnica, this is based on Department of Highway law and farmers should question well drillers when they see new wells being drilled closer than 200’ of their land. The well drillers program is managed by the NYS DEC but is not enforced by the NYS DEC. *Submitted by Brian Boerman*

YIELD MONITORING: MAKING A DECISION OR HAVING A PLAN?

Since Hay/Forage season is upon us, it seemed appropriate to discuss a general topic that we rarely break down the bits and pieces of..... yield monitoring. Yield monitors are one of the first steps that many producers adopt into the advancement of GPS with controlled traffic farming. Where the costs are reasonable, we often find the constraint to be time to effectively manage the data you gather.

Crop performance is sought after by every grower, using a yield monitor with GPS technology. There are many pieces of information provided from this combination: Yield Map Data, Management Variables, Field History, Soil Fertility, Compaction, Weather, and Water Management.

While the list can continue to grow, it is the decision making process that grower's must contemplate, and determine just how involved you want to become in the precision farming effort, and define what your short and long term goals are. Do you have a specific plan in mind? Do you make decisions with priorities in mind? Do you generally go with "your gut"? Do you believe you are qualified to make precision farming management decisions? These are just some of the questions you might ask yourself this year when considering some new form of yield monitoring practice with GPS.

HOW INPUTS AFFECT YIELD (A.K.A. MAKING A DECISION)

Using yield monitors to gather yield data at the end of the season, you download all of the information collected throughout the year to your office computer. You then use the data to see how each of your field activities and inputs affected yield. For example, if you record a field you have a given hybrid and a certain herbicide and a certain level of nutrient, and if you then put a yield map over that, you can see yield variation based on those inputs. Then, if you change any of those inputs and that change affects yield, you have to be able to analyze where that happens and why.

The whole point of the data tracking is to make better management decisions, using any results to make better input decisions for next year, or have you planned that far ahead?

PRODUCTION COSTS (A.K.A. HAVING A PLAN)

Next you would like to get georeference field data to tie to your financial records to receive real-time record of your "cost production" per field. Knowing the costs based on proper yield information can assist in better planning to apply in each field before the season begins. By having the right tools in place, and a little help from your ACS professional, you develop a plan that allows you to market your crop and receive real-time data of your costs.

With the given examples above, this is where ACS has been able to bridge the gap between precision guidance solutions and crop consulting. It is truly the best of both worlds for your decision making and planning process year after year.



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