



MAKING THE MOST OF FALL MANURE

Most dairies begin spreading manure as soon as corn silage is harvested and fields become available. Early fall is a great time to spread manure: fields are easily accessed, there should be ample good days for spreading, and farm labor is available for the task. Farms that operate under a CAFO permit need to follow manure recommendations from a certified planner at all times, so putting together next year's crop rotation plan now – before the 2011 season is quite over – is a necessary chore. That way, you will have a set of manure recommendations for next year's crops when the spreaders are ready to roll this fall.

It's not as hard as it sounds. Alfalfa fields that are at the end of their productive years, and corn fields in their last year are the fields to be rotated. Most farm managers have a few minutes to review a draft rotation plan from their consultant and give the go-ahead to develop a plan for fall spreading, liming and fertilizing. Next year's alfalfa seedings – are they at

pH 6.8 now or do they need lime? Which corn fields should get fall manure – those that need the most N or the most potash? Should fall manure be incorporated? Where do cover crops fit in?

Cornell guidelines for New York say that all of the ammonia is lost from fall-applied manure (or manure that is not incorporated within 5 days in *any* season), so if a field has a limit to how much manure may be spread on it, it might be better to wait until spring and incorporate that manure. With injection or same-day incorporation, 65% of ammonia nitrogen is available to corn planted soon after. Another option is to establish a cover crop and then apply a moderate rate of manure in late fall, when soil microorganisms that break down ammonia are not active. Penn State figures up to 50% of the ammonia nitrogen will be available from manure applied in the late fall or winter to a growing cover crop will be available to the next year's corn crop.

Pay Now...Save Later

ACS offers a significant discount for prepaying by September 15th.

September 1st marks the official start of the 2012 crop year, as well as the start of your ACS Crop Management and Compliance service year. If your ACS Service Manager has not contacted you yet regarding your 2012 service contract, they will be doing so in the next few weeks.

The prepay discount is 5% when paid in full by September 15th, 2011. We encourage you to take advantage of this prepay option, as it provides significant savings as well as possible 2011 tax advantages. In many cases, the 5% discount is equal to, or greater than what you will

spend in soil and manure sampling fees throughout the coming months.

If you miss the opportunity to prepay now, you can choose this option at any time during the year. The remaining charges not yet posted to your account are eligible for prepayment at a 2.5% discount.

If you would like to take advantage of the prepayment discount, please contact your ACS Service Manager or call our office at 800-344-2697, extension 2171.

Conservation Innovation Grants Allow Installation and Trials of Precision Guidance Systems on Area Farms

Cornell University, Farmland Environmental, Agrinetix, and Agricultural Consulting Services recently hosted demonstrations featuring precision guidance systems that control manure applications and zone-till corn planting. Farmland Environmental was awarded Conservation Innovation Grant funding provided by the Natural Resource and Conservation Services.

Staff at Agrinetix and Agricultural Consulting Services spent the summer working with area farms to create precision manure application systems. This project protects water bodies by eliminating the ability of a manure spreader to operate in designated no-spread areas.

Precision guidance systems on farm equipment and automated controls on manure pumps shut off manure spreading as the tractor approaches regulated “no-spread zones” and even can be made to apply manure at varying rates across a field. These systems can precisely control the application of manure without any effort or prior knowledge of the area by the operator.

For the corn planting trial, ACS and Agrinetix installed Real Time Kinematic (RTK) guidance and auto steer equipment that allows for repeatable sub-inch accuracy. This project directly measures the corn plant responses when planted directly on top of the tillage slot using RTK guidance, 4 inches off the slot, 8 inches off the slot, and planted without a guidance system by an experienced planter operator. The variables measured by the trial are plant stand populations, root development, forage quality, and yield.

The introduction of RTK guidance systems to New York is an innovative strategy that can improve yield response and also support the adoption of conservation zone tillage, improving soil health and reducing soil loss.

Agricultural Consulting Services, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Farmland Environmental, works closely with Agrinetix to develop and deliver innovative crop management and environmental protection services to farms.

These projects were made possible through an NRCS Conservation Innovation Grant.

REMINDERS:

1. All farms need at least some **soil samples** taken each year. Take advantage of our 5% prepay discount by paying for this sampling by September 15th. We will post \$105 dollars to your account for every \$100 you send in, then send a monthly statement indicating the status of your account. Please call 800-344-2697, extension 157 or contact your Service Manager for more information.
2. The sooner we can get your **rotation information**, the sooner we can develop your fall Manure Application Planner. Please help us to serve you better by providing timely information to your ACS Service Manager.
3. Through our partnership with Agrinetix, we can help you with the **newest technologies**. If you are purchasing new equipment or would like to discuss how some of the newer technologies may (or may not) make sense for your farm, give us a call. If you have a yield monitor on your chopper, let us know. If you are getting a new chopper, think hard about getting a yield monitor. Call to discuss why.
4. Ask us about the Corn Stalk Nitrate Test (**CSNT**) and the Illinois Soil Nitrate Test (**ISNT**) to fine-tune your nitrogen management.



Manure spreading using a precision guidance system

