8-1-2005

Educational event to address gulf hypoxia and local water quality concerns

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Abstract
Losses of major nutrients from agricultural lands to water resources in the Upper Mississippi River Sub-basin and throughout the Corn Belt can affect downstream drinking water supplies and aquatic systems and contribute to hypoxia in the northern Gulf of Mexico. In an effort to find solutions to reducing these problems, the Gulf Hypoxia and Local Water Quality Concerns Workshop is being held September 26--28 on the Iowa State University (ISU) campus.

Keywords
Agronomy

Disciplines
Agricultural Education | Agricultural Science | Agriculture | Agronomy and Crop Sciences

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In an effort to find solutions to reducing these problems, the Gulf Hypoxia and Local Water Quality Concerns Workshop is being held September 26--28 on the Iowa State University (ISU) campus.

"At this 'working' workshop there will be the opportunity for all attendees to participate in establishing what is known, and what information is still needed, about tools to reduce nitrogen and phosphorus losses from croplands," said Jim Baker, professor emeritus, Agricultural and Biosystems Engineering, ISU.

"This will be critical as we develop future plans and programs to improve water quality in the Corn Belt and beyond," he said.

"Anyone with an interest in water quality problems associated with agriculture and the potential and limitations of possible solutions should consider attending this conference. This includes those working in ag production and ag consulting/supplies, agricultural and environmental groups, local, state, and federal agencies, state and federal legislatures, university research and extension, as well as the press," said Dean Lemke, chief, Water Resource Bureau, Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship.

The program includes 15 sessions, each focusing on a specific question or topic. For each topic, a panel of experts will prepare a short, preliminary paper addressing the topic. These will be provided to all workshop attendees prior to the workshop on the Web at www.umrshnc.org [1].

During the workshop session, a lead speaker will provide a 20--30 minute overview of the question, followed by 30 minutes of panel discussion with input and participation from the audience. Involvement is the key to this workshop.

Following the workshop, the preliminary papers will be revised to include input from the workshop participants and panelists. The final report will be compiled and posted on the Web following the conference.

To register or learn more about the workshop, go to the Upper Mississippi River Sub-basin Hypoxia Nutrient Committee website [2].

The workshop is sponsored by the Upper Mississippi River Sub-basin Hypoxia Nutrient Committee (UMRSHNC), Iowa State University College of Agriculture, EPA regions 5 & 7, and the USDA Agricultural Research Service.

This article originally appeared on page 162 of the IC-494(21) -- August 1, 2005 issue.
