Manure management policy

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Abstract
Manure management policy and regulations are issues of concern to many Iowa crop and livestock producers. These policies and regulations have been changing so quickly that often we barely have time to comprehend the effects of one set of policies before a new draft has replaced the old policies. Currently, there are regulations in Iowa that are being discussed at both the state and federal levels.

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Manure management policy and regulations are issues of concern to many Iowa crop and livestock producers. These policies and regulations have been changing so quickly that often we barely have time to comprehend the effects of one set of policies before a new draft has replaced the old policies. Currently, there are regulations in Iowa that are being discussed at both the state and federal levels.

Iowa DNR draft rules

This past spring, the Iowa General Assembly passed HF 2494 that called for strengthening manure management regulations that had been passed in 1995. In mid-November, the Environmental Protection Commission voted to send the draft rules proposed by the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) staff and recommendations from the Animal Agriculture Consulting Organization (AACO) out for public comment. The proposed rules address concerns to implement the new law such as requiring an additional 4,000 existing operations to file manure management plans, county involvement in locating animal feeding operations, and new separation distances and manure applicator certification requirements. Public comment on the draft rules and recommendations by AACO will be accepted through written comments and four public hearings that are being scheduled for early January 1999. At present, draft rules have not been made available, but it is anticipated that copies will be available on the DNR website [1] after December 16.

For information on training dates and study guides for the manure applicator certification program, coordinated by Iowa State University Extension, please contact your local county extension office, or access http://extension.agron.iastate.edu/manure/ [2].

EPA-USDA unified draft strategy on animal feeding operations

The Clean Water Action Plan, released in February 1998, calls for the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to develop a unified national strategy to minimize the water quality and public health impacts of animal feeding operations. Animal feeding operations are agricultural enterprises where animals are kept and raised in confinement.

To minimize water quality and public health impacts from animal feeding operations and the land application of manure, the draft strategy encourages the owners and operators of all such operations to develop and implement a Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan that will contain the following types of actions: feed management, manure handling and storage, land application of manure, land management, record keeping, and other utilization options.
For the majority of animal feeding operations, voluntary efforts will be the principal approach to assist owners and operators in developing management plans. Large animal feeding operations, known as concentrated animal feeding operations and high-risk animal feeding operations, will be required to address concerns through National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permits.

The USDA-EPA unified draft strategy is currently open for public comment and review. Copies of the strategy can be accessed by calling the EPA’s Water Resources Center at (202) 260-7786 or by accessing the following website: http://www.epa.gov/owm/afostrat.htm [3]. Comments on the strategy are being accepted through January 19, 1999. Comments can be sent to Denise C. Coleman, USDA-NRCS, P.O. Box 2890, Washington, D.C. 20013-2890.

A listening session regarding the USDA-EPA unified draft strategy is scheduled for December 4, 1998, from 2-5 p.m. at the Wallace State Office Building in Des Moines. The public is invited to make verbal comments and submit written comments at this time.

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