

NMAB Approves

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line for the development of regulations to control the handling and use of nutrients.

The first segment of nutrient control to be addressed is with the management of manure stemming from agricultural operations.

In concept, the Act was created to address the dual problem of an increase in livestock numbers in the Susquehanna River Watershed and a heavy increase in the amount of nutrients being drained into the watershed.

Originally, the decline of the water quality in the Chesapeake Bay — attributed directly to incoming nutrient flows from all the major contributing rivers — was recognized as a problem because of algal blooms, fish kills or disappearances, dramatic changes in the types of aquatic life present, and the formation of a summertime bottom layer in the bay where oxygen was depleted to the point that higher forms of life, such as mollusks and fish, could no longer survive.

Initial analyses of the problem targeted increased agricultural livestock production in the lower regions of the Susquehanna watershed, and, to an extent, some other "nonpoint" sources of nutrients as the culprit for the overloading of nutrients.

Since then, storm water runoff (such as all the runoff from streets, roofs and parking lots), an assumed large number of old and untested residential on-lot septic systems, and unknown amounts of nutrients being applied to residen-

tial lawns and recreational areas, such as golf courses, have come under the scrutiny of those following the development of nutrient controls.

Included in the Act are provisions for the state Department of Environmental Resources to address those issues.

However, with agriculture being the first area of concern, the State Conservation Commission has been given responsibility of developing regulations and for enforcement of those regulations.

The State Conservation Commission was selected as the agency of choice for overseeing the administration of the law as a compromise between groups primarily concerned with environmental purity and those primarily concerned with agricultural prosperity.

The commission was initially created as an autonomous agency to oversee the state's conservation districts, which receive funding from federal, state and local coffers.

It was adopted to oversee nutrient management because of farmer distrust of DER. Instead, it was assumed that local conservation district office personnel — who serve as a direct working link between farmers and soil and water conservation practices, among a number of other responsibilities — would act as local administrator of a nutrient management program.

However, local conservation districts do not have to accept responsibility or authority for car-

rying out the program. The local board of directors for conservation districts will make the decision as to whether or not funding and manpower is adequate to accept enforcement authority from the state.

In the meantime, the advisory board has been busy working with commission staff to recommend, review and comment on proposals for regulations which would ensure that certification regulations are finalized by January 1995, and that nutrient management regulations are finalized by July 1995.

Interim Criteria Approved Changes

One of the first actions of the advisory board was to help create "interim criteria" for the development of a certification program for technicians who eventually will be authorized to create "approved" nutrient management plans.

Those interim criteria are not regulation, but they outline the perceived scope of competency a person would be required to attain in order to create a valid nutrient management plan.

Currently, those areas of competency focus on livestock and

crop agricultural operations and an understanding of the flow of nutrients in an agricultural operation.

According to the Act, the criteria are recommendations to the state Department of Agriculture, which has been given authority to develop a nutrient management certification program.

Proposed interim criteria were approved by the advisory board during its January meeting and published by the State Conservation Commission in the Pennsylvania Bulletin on Jan. 15. A 30-day comment period followed.

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Plan To Apply Now To Plan Later

HARRISBURG (Dauphin Co.) — With interim criteria for creating a nutrient management certification program intact and progress in creating the final program underway, those who would seek to become certified can begin seeking applications for interim certification, according to state Secretary of Agriculture Boyd Wolff.

Under the state Nutrient Management Act, the state Department of Agriculture is to create and administer a nutrient management certification program. It is to follow the guidelines included in interim criteria, which were approved with modification Wednesday by the Nutrient Management Advisory Board to the state Conservation Commission.

In a statement released Wednesday,

Wolff said, "The final certification program is currently under development. This year we will focus on educational programs for those who qualify for interim certification."

According to the statement, interim certification will help identify persons interested in seeking certification as Nutrient Management Specialists when regulations are finalized. The regulations are scheduled for finalization in January 1995.

During the interim, or precertification period, training is to be offered to enhance knowledge of nutrient management and conservation practices planning.

According to Wolff, those who apply to the PDA for interim certification will be notified directly when and where training will be

available.

Furthermore, during a Wednesday meeting of the Nutrient Management Advisory Board, it was announced that Penn State Cooperative Extension is planning to do some extensive training in this area, incorporating the use of telecommunications, such as is being used with those enrolled in the continuing education required under a certification program for licensed pesticide applicators. That program is also administered by the PDA.

According to Wolff, for more information about the nutrient management specialist certification program, or to get an application for interim certification, contact Lee Bentz, in the PDA Bureau of Plant Industry at (717) 787-4843.



Brooks-Petzold Limousin Show Best

ENGLEWOOD, Colo. — Doug Hixon of Laramie, Wyo. sorted a competitive field of 26 entries in the National Western Junior Limousin Show January 12 in Denver.

For grand champion honors, he went with SY Bobbie Jo 326B, an 8/25/92 daughter of LKCC Tomahawk's Touchdown out of Miss SY Supercharge 327U. Amy Brooks of Marietta, Okla. exhibited the champion. She also led this female to the grand championship of the sale show that followed.

Clint Petzold of Clinton, Okla. had the reserve grand champion with OTSS Ballerina 2101B, a 4/21/92 daughter of YKCC Top Line 180X out of YKCL Miss Virginian R103V.

Other class winners in the show included Jessica Smith of Paris, Ky. with Cane Ridge Dream Girl 495, a 10/30/92 daughter of Polled Pack Leader 1182U out of TEXS Star Dream Girl.

Shawn Smith of Paris, Ky. also had a class winner with Cane Ridge Maggie 653C, a 3/1/93 daughter of Polled Silverstone 7089Y out of Cane Ridge Polled Jody.

Clint Petzold was named junior champion showman.

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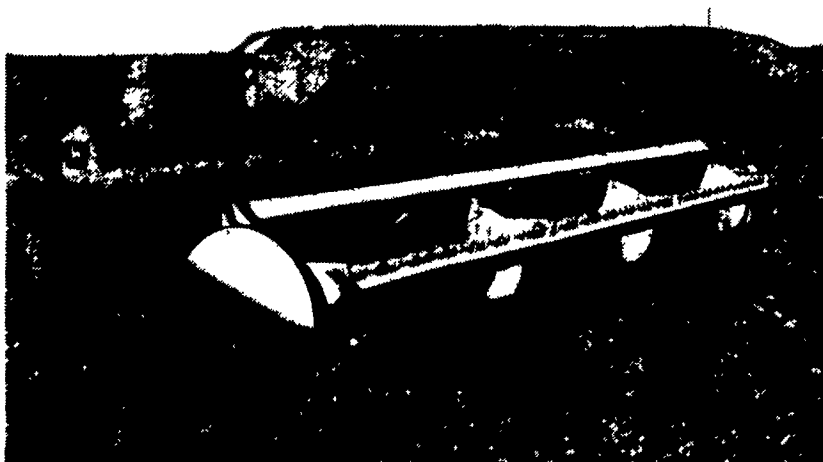
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