

## Public Hearings

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meeting of the Ag Issues Forum Thursday morning.

Ms. Langer said the program includes regulatory, educational, compliance assistance, and alternate use aspects. DEP looks at nutrient management as putting the nutrients in manure back into production rather than in the ground water or streams.

The regulatory aspect applies to high density concentrated animal operations (cao's), with more than 2,000 pounds of livestock per acre to spread manure. This doesn't affect nearly all the farms in Pennsylvania. Langer estimated that about six (6) percent of the farms will be will come under the regulations, but many of these farms will be in Lancaster County.

On a question from the floor, Langer said the six percent estimate came from the National Conservation Service that hired the National Center For Research

Implementation to do a study of clients from statistical analysis of census figures. In addition to the farms under the regulatory program, the act also encourages voluntary compliance.

In Lancaster County, because many local municipalities have regulations, nutrient management plans are now being written and have been written for seven or eight years as part of the requirements to farm. The regulations developed by the state nutrient management advisory board set up by the act, has set goals to have the plan be something workable for farmers and still meet the conditions set up by the act.

Three groups of certified nutrient management specialists are authorized in the program: commercial; public (such as conservation district personnel who will also review the individual farm plans), and individuals. Farmers have the option to become certified to do their own plans to minimize their costs.

The new law will mean more than determining your field's nutrient needs and matching these needs with the application of manure. This is included, but you will also need to have conservation practices that keep your manure from running off the fields and barnyards into streams.

As funds are available, there may be financial assistance from grants or low cost loans. Training will be provided for those who want to become certified or who just want to know what they need do to comply with the law. The commission is also looking at alternative manure uses to help farmers, such as composting, bio gas digestion, and feeding programs to keep nutrients out of the manure.

Information meetings and public hearings have not been set to date, but notices should be coming shortly. A 90-day period for the commission to take public comment is required. It is expected that these hearings will start shortly after the beginning of the new year and last through the end of March. Call your county agent or conservation district director for information about these hearings or the informational meetings. Or watch the local farm press for times and dates as they are released.



LEBANON (Lebanon Co.) — The Pennsylvania Pork Producer's Council is sponsoring a junior public speaking contest at the Keystone Pork Expo here at the Lebanon Valley Expo Center on Feb. 14 at 9:30 a.m.

Participation is open to youth ages 8 to 19. Three age categories — 8-11 years, 12-15 years, and 16-19 years — will be competing.

The subject of each three to five minute speech will be one of the following:

- "Protecting Pork Producer's Rights"
- "Humor In the Pig Pen"
- "Pigs and the Environment"
- "The Other White Meat"
- "Animal Rights: An Industry Problem"

The speech may be humorous or serious, include statistics, cooking, and nutrition. Humor is encouraged. Typewritten manuscripts, in triplicate, with a cover including the contestant's name, age,

address, county, and speech title are required. Bring them along to the contest.

Rules will be sent upon receipt of entry. Cash prizes of \$50, \$40, \$30, \$20, and \$10 will be awarded to the top five contestants in each category.

Entries will be accepted from now until Feb. 1. Please send the name, address, and county to Jr. Public Speaking Contest, c/o Bruce Lemmon, 855 Alexander Spring Road, Carlisle, PA 17013.

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