

Phosphorus Conference: Farmers Need Tools

(continued from last week)

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Lancaster Farming Staff
STATE COLLEGE (Centre Co.) — More research is needed on phosphorus, according to researchers and nutrient managers attending a three-day conference on agricultural phosphorus in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed.

The conference was held last week at the Penn Stater Conference Center (formerly the Scanticon, located near the football stadium) in State College.

In addition, to continued research on the roles and actions of phosphorus in the real world, according to members of a four-person panel representing those who manage nutrients and deal with phosphorus, research efforts need to be emphasized in developing practical, reliable and inexpensive tools to help those in the field actually working to manage nutrients.

The panel discussion followed the presentations of 12 speakers during the first two days of the conference.

The last day's panel of four people with practical nutrient manage-

ment were asked to share their experiences and to discuss their practices and concerns.

The proceedings of the conference are to be published later this year, according to Dr. Andrew Sharpley, a soil scientist working for the USDA Agricultural Research Service at its Pasture Systems and Watershed Management Research Laboratory in University Park.

Jointly sponsored by the Chesapeake Bay Program's Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee and the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Agricultural Research Service, the conference was attended by specialists and researchers of nutrient management, soil science, agricultural operations and the nutrient phosphorus.

Represented were those involved with commercial fertilizer businesses, integrated livestock operations, feed companies, manure application and nutrient management businesses, state environmental and resource conservation agencies, environmental awareness and support groups, and, of

course, university and government research and Extension services.

The conference objectives were to determine the inputs of phosphorus to the Chesapeake Bay watershed and assess the current status of phosphorus in agricultural soils; establish the relative impact and location of source

areas; identify and delineate what processes control the critical sources and pathways of phosphorus export over a range of scales in the Bay Watershed; and discuss and prioritize future trends for phosphorus management in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed.

Information was presented by,

and shared with, representatives of the other states involved with the Chesapeake Bay restoration effort.

The phosphorus conference was held to "... initiate efforts to identify (agricultural runoff) sources of phosphorus, the controls of phosphorus export, and recommend

(Turn to Page A29)

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