

(Continued from Page A1)

implementation of the plan, plans are to be filed with the Maryland Department of Agriculture, and the department is to maintain a copy of the plan for three years in a manner that protects the identity of the individual.

Fines are to consist of notification for a first offense for not having a plan, followed by a penalty of not more than \$250 for subsequent failure to have a plan; a warning for a first offense of not implementing a plan, followed by a fine of not more than \$100 for each

subsequent violation, not to exceed \$2,000 per farmer or operator per year.

The fines are to be paid into the Maryland Agricultural Water Quality Cost Share Program.

Those who apply nutrients to land on a commercial basis must be a certified nutrient management consultant or work under one, while those who apply to their own land must complete an educational program in nutrient application (to be developed by the Md. Department of Agriculture), every three years.

For the application of nutrients

to non-agricultural lands of three or more acres, or state property, are to follow the recommendations of the University of Maryland Cooperative Extension Service.

There are provisions to supply funds for cost-sharing for the development of plans; for creating a service to match up those with excess manure and those who could use it; to establish a four-year pilot program to establish a transfer and market system to more poultry litter.

By Dec. 31, 2001, all contract feed that is fed to chickens has to contain phytase or some other

enzyme that helps utilize the birds uptake of phosphorus in order to reduce the level in the litter.

There is to be money also to develop and demonstrate alternative uses and markets for animal waste.

Farmers are to receive tax credits of up to \$4,500 per year for three years for costs related to transitioning to phosphorus-based nutrient management, and an additional deduction for equipment expenses related to poultry or livestock manure spreading.

There are to be funds to pay for the hiring of at least 110 field positions in the state's soil conservation districts by July 1, 1999.

There is to be a religious exemption.

The legislation provides that the Maryland Department of Agriculture may adopt religious exemptions in case the law creates "... a conflict with the bona fide reli-

gious beliefs and practices of persons subject to this subtitle."

It was explained earlier this year that reflected concern for the Plain Sects.

In a news release calling the legislative session a success for Maryland, Gov. Glendening said, "This 1998 legislative session is a tremendous victory for all Maryland families. As a direct result of the strong partnership and spirit of cooperation between the Legislature and my Administration, we are on the verge of completing a remarkable legislative session that will really make a difference in the lives of the children and families in Maryland."

The nutrient management legislation is called the Water Quality Improvement Act of 1998. It is the first piece of legislation praised in the news release, and is described as "a measure that will protect the

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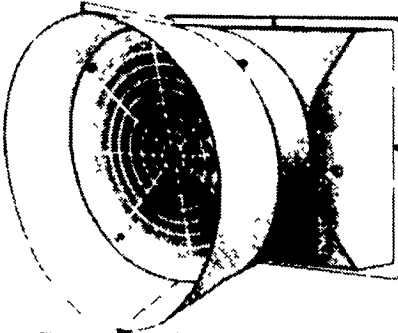
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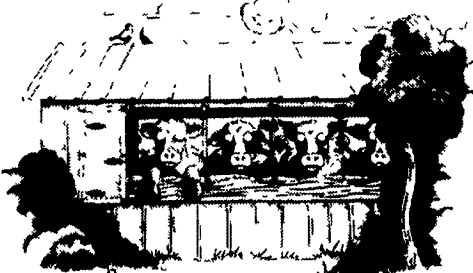
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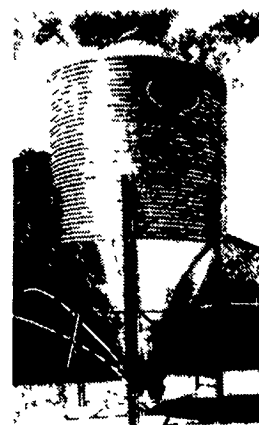


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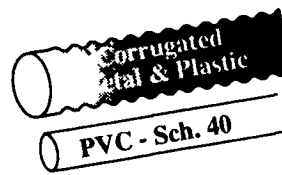
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