

Comment Period Allows Farmers A Voice In Nutrient Management Law

Pennsylvania P Index Version 1 (Released April 2003 Penn State, Dept Crop & Soil Sciences & USDA-ARS, Pasture Systems & Watershed Mgmt Research Unit)
Farm Identification

PART A		Field ID →			
Soil Test P	Greater than 200 ppm P (Mehlich-3)				
Contributing Dist.	Less than 150 ft				
200 ppm P=400 lb P/acre for a plow layer depth soil sample					
PART B SOURCE FACTORS		Field ID →			
Mehlich-3 Soil Test P (ppm P)		0	0	0	0
Soil Test Rating = 0.20* Mehlich-3 Soil Test P (ppm P)		0	0	0	0
Fertilizer P Rate		Fertilizer P (lb P ₂ O ₅ /acre)			
Fertilizer Application Method	0.2 Placed or injected 2" or more deep 0.4 Incorporated <1 week following application 0.6 Incorporated >1 week or not incorporated following application in April - October 0.8 Incorporated >1 week or not incorporated following application in Nov - March 1.0 Surface applied to frozen or snow covered soil				
Fertilizer Rating = Fertilizer Rate x Fertilizer Application Method		0	0	0	0
Manure P Rate		Manure P (lb P ₂ O ₅ /acre)			
Manure Application Method	0.2 Placed or injected 2" or more deep 0.4 Incorporated <1 week following application 0.6 Incorporated >1 week or not incorporated following application in April - October 0.8 Incorporated >1 week or not incorporated following application in Nov - March 1.0 Surface applied to frozen or snow covered soil				
Manure P Availability		Refer to P Index Fact Sheet Table 1 Organic P source availability coefficients			
Manure Rating = Manure Rate x Manure Application Method x Manure P Availability		0	0	0	0
Source Factor Sum		0	0	0	0
PART B: TRANSPORT FACTORS		Field ID →			
EROSION		Soil Loss (ton/A/yr)			
Runoff Potential	0 Very Low 2 Low 4 Medium 6 High 8 V. High				
Subsurface Drainage	0 None 1 Random 2 Patterned				
Contributing Distance	> 500 ft 2 500 to 350 ft 4 349 to 250 ft 6 150 to 249 ft 8 < 150 ft				
Transport Sum = Erosion+Runoff Potential+Subsurface Drainage+Contributing Distance		0	0	0	0
Modified Connectivity	0.7 Riparian Buffer APPLIES TO DIST < 150 FT 1.0 Grassed Waterway or None 1.1 Direct Connection APPLIES TO DIST > 150 FT				
Transport Sum x Modified Connectivity/22		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
P Index Value = 2 x Source x Transport					

MANAGEMENT GUIDANCE		
P Index Values	P Index Rating	Nutrient Application Guidance
0 to 10	Very High	No Phosphorus applied

-----USER'S NOTE-----
The final P Index value cell will change color as the P Index rating changes from Low to Medium to High to Very High. The color coding in the Management Guidance Table corresponds to the color changes that will be seen in the final P Index value cell.

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these are just a few of the many proposed changes on the table for Pennsylvania's Nutrient Management Act (Act 6).

The revisions for Act 6 are coming close to a final draft ready for public review. This is Pennsylvania's opportunity to review the proposed changes and submit their thoughts on the proposals as this law revision heads toward final approval and implementation in late 2004.

"We're looking at regulations changes, one, because our law requires that in five years we had to relook at our regulations and see if we were going the right way. Secondly, we have had six years of experience with the program and people challenging what the commission has done," said Doug Goodlander of the State Conservation Commission (SCC), which administers the state's nutrient management program.

For the commission, the new program guidelines continue to represent a balance between public concerns and keeping agriculture profitable, while avoiding regulations that could negatively impact the industry.

"The commission continues to be in a balance of trying to address all these issues without shutting the industry down," said Goodlander. "It's a real balance — this is the next attempt at that balance."

The proposals have been approved by the commission and are being prepared for review by the State Attorney General's Office with an estimated target date for public review in January.


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This worksheet is used to evaluate a field to calculate the P-index, determining what standard — nitrogen or phosphorus — will be used to apply manure.

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