

# Dairy Feed Management

## How many plans have you written? Let us know

From Virginia Ishler  
Nutrient management specialist  
Penn State Dairy Alliance

In the last several weeks, I have received inquiries from many of you about writing feed management plans, in particular about where to submit them. A reminder that if you are NOT a technical service provider and are writing your first two plans, they should be submitted to the following:

### In Pennsylvania, submit plans to BOTH:

Virginia Ishler  
Penn State University  
324 Henning Building  
University Park, PA16802

Jana Malot, USDA/NRCS  
PA State Office  
One Credit Union Place, Suite 340  
Harrisburg, PA 17110-2993

### In Maryland, submit plans to:

Rick Kohn  
University of Maryland  
Animal Sciences Building (#142)  
College Park, MD 20742

I believe more plans may have been written than we are aware of. Please take a minute to click on the link below and complete a brief, five-question survey that will enable us to get a better accounting of the number of plans that have been written to date, as well as the number expected to be written by the end of this year.

Survey link:

[http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=GOSkkBcM6FeZiQsts5WDpg\\_3d\\_3d](http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=GOSkkBcM6FeZiQsts5WDpg_3d_3d)

Please direct any questions about the survey to me at 888-373-7232 or at [vishler@psu.edu](mailto:vishler@psu.edu). Thank you for your assistance.



A newsletter for certified feed management planners

August 2009 Volume 1, Issue 8

## Climate change

### EPA official touts House bill's benefits to agriculture

Source: Bureau of National Affairs Daily Environment Report (July 17, 2009)

Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Lisa Jackson July 16 called for American agriculture to support climate change legislation that is under consideration in Congress.

Speaking to the National Corn Growers Association, Jackson said climate and energy legislation (H.R. 2454) passed by the House June 26 has many provisions benefiting agriculture, and the bill provides "significant opportunities for agriculture and rural economies."

The bill would allow farms and forests to generate greenhouse gas emissions offsets by using practices that sequester carbon, such as conservation tillage and forest preservation. The offsets would function the same as emissions allowances, and farmers would be able to sell them to companies that generate emissions under the emissions cap-and-trade program the bill would establish.

EPA projects that American farmers, foresters, and ranchers would receive nearly \$3 billion in offsets under the bill in 2020 alone, Jackson said, adding farmers would also benefit from opportunities for renewable energy under the bill, including methane from animal wastes, geothermal energy, and wind power.

Jackson acknowledged that some agriculture-related industries with high energy consumption, such as fertilizer production, would be significantly affected by the emissions cap in the bill, but said these industries would receive free allocations of emissions allowances to soften the impact. These allowances would prevent the need for price increases that would give international competitors an advantage, she said.

"I would strongly urge you to support these and other measures in the bill before the Senate," Jackson said.

While many in agriculture are concerned about the effect of the bill on their business, "rather than gearing up for battle, it's important that we work towards partnership—for our sake and yours," Jackson said.

Jackson said corn growers should support the bill because farm-state representatives won significant benefits for them in the House bill. If corn growers want farm-state senators to preserve these benefits in the Senate bill, "they need to know that corn growers will recognize and appreciate those benefits," and not oppose senators who vote for climate bill that includes them.

Senate Agriculture Committee Chairman Tom Harkin (D-Iowa) has indicated he wants to

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# Sawdust alternatives: Other materials compost well

(Source: Dairy Today.com)

While dairy compost barns may be unmatched for cow comfort, finding a reliable, reasonably priced supply of sawdust bedding can be challenging.

When the economy was booming and sawmills and wood manufacturers were working 24/7, competition for sawdust was fierce among dairy producers and manufacturers who use sawdust as composite material or burn it for energy. Now that the economy has tanked, simply finding sawdust is a challenge.

Researchers at the University of Minnesota (U of M) have conducted several studies evaluating sawdust substitutes and partial substitutes at the West Central Research and Outreach Center in Morris, Minn. Using sawdust as a control, a team led by U of M dairy specialist Marcia Endres compared corncobs, woodchip fines and soybean straw.

“Cow comfort [based on the number of cows lying down] was similar among materials,” Endres says. Eighty percent of cows on sawdust had no hock lesions. But 53% of cows on soybean straw and 62% of cows on soybean straw mixed with woodchips had lesions, with hair loss. Body condition scores averaged 3.0, hygiene scores averaged 2.5 and somatic cell counts averaged 157,000. “It appears that any of the materials tested can work in a compost barn, as long as excellent management of the bedding pack and appropriate milking prep procedures are followed on a consistent basis,” Endres says.

- By Jim Dickrell

## Milkfat depression is multifaceted

(Source: Nutritionist e-Network, published by Dairy Herd Management® magazine)

Low milkfat issues continue to be a concern on many dairy farms throughout the U.S. This is a serious economic issue, says Adam Lock, nutritionist at the University of Vermont. A small reduction in milkfat percent, depending on the milk-pricing system, can cause a significant drop in milk price per hundredweight. Milkfat depression is the result of several dietary factors, not just one factor, Lock told audience members at the California Animal Nutrition conference in May. The risk of milkfat depression can also be increased when there are changes in how the diet is presented to the cow. To read Lock’s paper, visit <http://www.das.psu.edu/dairy-alliance/pdf/milk-fat-depression-lock.pdf>

## Fertilizer pellets made from composted manure

(Source: Masayuki Hara, Agriculture Research Division, Mie Prefectural Science and Technology Promotion Center, Japan)

Compost made from livestock manure is an effective material for improving the physical and chemical condition of soil. However, there are two factors that limit the application of ordinary composted livestock manure. The first problem is that composted livestock manure usually has a high moisture content and a high volume per unit of weight. As a result, it is difficult and costly to transport.

The second problem is that the quality of the compost and its nutrient content are not constant. This also limits the efficient use of compost. The molding technology used for composted livestock manure is an effective solution to both problems.

A pelleting machine is used to make composted livestock manure into pellets 5 mm in diameter. The dried pellets retain their form during storage and distribution, and have a volume only 60-90% of the raw compost. When the pellets are scattered, they generate only one-tenth or less of the dust generated by ordinary compost. To read the full paper, visit: <http://www.das.psu.edu/dairy-alliance/pdf/japan-fertilizer-pellets.pdf>

## Climate change

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expand benefits for farmers in any Senate version of the climate bill. The House bill included enhanced offset provisions under a last-minute agreement between House Energy and Commerce Committee Chairman Henry Waxman (D-Calif.) and House Agriculture Committee Chairman Collin Peterson (D-Minn.).

In addition, the agreement would repeal a requirement in the Energy Independence and Security Act (Pub. L. 110-140) for EPA to analyze indirect greenhouse gas emissions arising overseas from the production of ethanol in the United States.

The National Corn Growers Association praised the Waxman-Peterson agreement June 25, but said they want farmers to be able to get offset credit for practices they have been following since before 2001. Farmers who have been using sustainable practices for years should be rewarded, the group said.

Jackson pointed out to the corn growers that 15 billion gallons of ethanol are exempt from the analysis requirement.

- By Steven D. Cook

This publication available in alternative media on request.

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