

Improving Livestock Waste Management Practices in North Dakota

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Intensive animal industries are coming under increasing pressure to ensure that their feeding operations minimize adverse impacts on the environment; air, soil and water resources. All indications are that this focus will only continue to intensify until the public is satisfied that:

- a) the regulations are stringent enough to protect resources, and
- b) the various industries comply with those regulations.

While some changes to waste management policies are currently being considered at the Federal level, North Dakota has regulations that exceed EPA standards. Those regulations require producers with animal feeding operations to prevent any waste material from impacting surface or ground water quality. Air quality impacts, in terms of odor and hydrogen sulfide, are also limited. Larger operations require an "approval to operate" issued by the ND Department of Health.

The NDSU Extension Service has commenced a 4 year program to assist producers to assess their current waste management practices and provide educational material or technical assistance where needed. A survey of producers' waste management practices and informational needs is currently being completed. An inventory of educational resources from other North-Central states is being conducted. Information and assistance is available through workshop activities and individual farm visits.

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