

# Manure Nutrient Management Planning - Educational Programs and Producer Practices

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**E**nvironmental concerns about manure from animal feeding operations have resulted in regulatory agencies taking a closer look at how well producers are utilizing the nutrients contained in manure. In response to this development, a manure application planning workshop was held at 10 locations around the state during February and March of 2000. An evaluation questionnaire completed at the end of the workshop shows that many producers have yet to adopt management practices that will allow them to get the most benefit from their manure.

The objective of the workshop was to give producers the planning and record keeping skills necessary to take credit for the nutrient content of their manure as well as meet NDDH requirements. More than 120 producers and 45 extension and NRCS/SCD staff attended the 4-hour workshops. Each participant received a binder containing all of the information required to prepare a manure application plan.

In their evaluation questionnaires, just 15 out of the 120 producers reported that they had used manure tests in the past. Thirty-nine producers had tested soil from those fields receiving manure but only 17 had used manure nutrient credits to reduce fertilizer purchases. Seven out of the 120 producers had kept written records of manure applications and 10 had performed a calibration of their manure spreader.

Seventy-six percent of the producers that participated said that they were going to implement changes in their manure management practices. The most common changes planned were to test manure nutrient concentrations, to give credits for the manure nutrients applied, and to keep records.



**Dairy farmers calibrating a manure spreader during the State Dairy Convention tour.**