

Washington Nutrient Management (590) Standard Key Messages

NRCS uses science-based conservation practice standards to implement voluntary conservation programs on private agricultural and forestry land

- NRCS conservation practice standards are developed by a national team of technical experts, based on best available science, and in collaboration with agriculture and forestry leaders who can inform on emerging agricultural technologies how the practices can be implemented.
- NRCS practice standards are reviewed and updated at the national level every five years. States must review and may supplement national standards to ensure they meet state and local criteria (regulations) that may be more restrictive than national criteria. States may adopt national level standards without supplements.
- The national Nutrient Management (590) Standard was reviewed and updated in 2012.
- NRCS Washington (NRCS-WA) used a subcommittee to the STAC to ensure that NRCS heard state level input for possible incorporation into the nutrient management practice. NRCS has considered comments from the STAC Subcommittee and finalized the standard.
- The NRCS national office reviewed the final draft of the Washington Nutrient Management (590) Standard in February 2014.
 - NRCS-WA was advised by the Deputy Chief for Science and Technology that NRCS-WA misinterpreted the intent of the standard on frozen and saturated soils.
 - NRCS-WA will omit limits for applications based on calendar dates and develop guidance, especially around winter spreading. The guidance will be contained in the Washington Agronomy Technical Note 14.
 - A team of national, regional and state agronomists are developing the Washington Agronomy Technical Note 14. The technical note will address specific conditions where application of manure will be allowed if installed practices help mitigate for potential water quality impacts.
 - The 2005 Agronomy Technical Note 14 did not allow any manure applications when soil was frozen, ponded or saturated (coinciding with the 590 standard at that time). The revised Washington Agronomy Technical Note 14 will continue this guidance for best management practices for manure applications but still will not allow surface application on frozen, snow-covered or saturated soil following the new 590 standard criteria.

NOTE: A nutrient management plan developed for NRCS incentive programs is not the same as a dairy nutrient management plan. A nutrient management plan is used to manage the amount, source, placement and timing of plant nutrients and soil amendments to all lands where plant nutrients and soil amendments are applied. This includes small grains, row crop, pasture, orchards/vineyards, etc., farmed with commercial fertilizers as well as applied with manure and other organics. An NRCS standard is not intended to be used to substitute a local or state law.