

What does the NRCS EQIP Feed Management Program offer?

By enrolling in this program, farmers can receive (depending on eligibility):

- Financial Incentive to develop and implement a feed management plan that involves working with a nutritionist – studies show that farmers working with a nutritionist had a 20% increase in milk production and a 10% decrease in manure nutrient content compared to farmers who manage their rations on their own.
- Herd Grouping incentives for implementation of the feeding plans that may reduce the amount of nitrogen and phosphorus in their diet.

How do you know what should be in your cows' feed?

- Track your MUN to measure excess nitrogen in dairy herds.
- Reduce phosphorus supplements.
- Analyze the feed ration for an animal's specific crude protein needs.
- Move toward more highly digestible feeds (called "precision feeding").
- Analyze manure for actual levels of nitrogen and phosphorus excreted.



For information on Precision Feeding:

Penn State Dairy and Animal Science
<http://www.das.psu.edu/dairynutrition/>

Penn State Dairy Alliance
<http://dairyalliance.psu.edu/>

Pennsylvania Nutrient Management Plan
<http://panutrientmgmt.cas.psu.edu/>

Penn State Nutrient and Water Policy
<http://agenvpolicy.aers.psu.edu/default.htm>

For information about EQIP and other NRCS programs in Pennsylvania:

www.pa.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/



Precision Feeding for Pennsylvania Cattle Operations:

A Financial Assistance Program for Protecting Herd Health and Water Quality



What is precision feed management?

Using an assortment of tools, including more frequent analysis of feeds and milk and more frequent diet formulation, to reduce the uncertainties of feed delivery. This process enables maintenance or improvement in milk production and health with lower crude protein and mineral content in diets.

Did you know...

- ...precision feeding helps to improve water quality while also improving your bottom line?
- ... precision feeding protects reproductive health and milk production while reducing the nutrient content of manure?
- feeding excess nitrogen to cows costs the Chesapeake Bay dairy industry *\$18 million* a year?
- ... feeding just one pound less of soybean meal (at \$250/ton) can save 12 cents a day per cow?
- ... only 25-35% of the nitrogen in feed goes into milk, with the rest excreted in feces and urine?
- ... dairy diets often have 120-160% of the phosphorus needed, and that the excess is excreted in the manure?
- ... you are paying for these unneeded nutrients that not only cost you more but increase the manure nutrients you manage?
- ... there is an incentive program to help you improve your feed management, help reduce nutrients lost to the environment, and reduce your feed costs?

USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in Pennsylvania is offering the management practice through their Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) to help farmers improve feed management.

To ensure farmers have access to expert technical assistance to help improve feed management, The Pennsylvania State University and The University of Pennsylvania are developing a program for dairy feed nutritionists to provide them with training on developing feed management plans.



By helping farmers formulate their rations more accurately to meet their herd's production requirements, these partners are helping farmers decrease the nutrients that are excreted while maintaining or improving production and health. These feeding adjustments can help farmers reduce nitrogen excretions by 30-50% and phosphorous by 40-60%.

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