

Why Farmers are Choosing Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plans (CNMPs)

Livestock producers are being asked to comply with a growing rules and regulations regarding animal waste and water quality:

- Wisconsin's Agricultural Performance Standards include specific manure management requirements.
- Livestock Siting regulations have been enacted to protect a livestock farm's ability to grow and to meet environmental protections.
- The NR-243 permitting requirements for large farms have been updated and the Environmental Protection Agency requires the state to deal with medium-size livestock farms that have a discharge from the production site.
- EPA has established a goal of having CNMPs for all concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs) and medium-sized AFOs with a discharge by February 27, 2009.

The Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan (CNMP), was developed to help livestock producers face these regulations. The CNMP process itself is specifically for livestock operations. When complete, the CNMP can be used as an operation and maintenance plan for a livestock farm and provide a strategy for future investments for sustainable growth. The CNMP is a business planning tool much like an insurance coverage review or a tax planning session with your accountant. It allows a livestock producer to look ahead at environmental issues that will affect their operation.

A CNMP evaluates the potential risk to the environment posed by the livestock operation as currently operated. The planning process begins with a discussion of future plans for the operation, which may be anything from expansion to retirement. The CNMP will document the steps you have already taken to protect the environment, and help prioritize what risks should be addressed next. A CNMP should become part of your long range business plan to ensure that environmental protection issues are considered when future production plans are being developed.

Some private sector agronomists and engineering firms are NRCS-certified to develop CNMPs. The complexity of the issues that must be addressed by a CNMP requires that both an agronomic and engineering planner participate in the process.

The completed CNMP will give the livestock producer the documentation they need on their current environmental accomplishments plus a strategy to address any remaining issues. The CNMP will also provide a strategy to address environmental concerns if the operation changes.

Like insurance, the true value of a CNMP may not be evident until an accident or lawsuit occurs. The CNMP will provide information and records needed to respond to these situations in an accurate and professional manner.

Note: The CNMP process is confidential and information in it cannot be released to other agencies or individuals without your written consent.

Why Should I do a CNMP? *Because It Makes Good Business Sense!!*

- **CNMPs can help with the DNR permit process and with NR151 compliance.**
- **Assess your Risk and Reduce your Liability** – Manure spills, storage overflow and illegal discharges are just few of the environmental risks that any livestock operation faces. A CNMP documents the steps you have taken to reduce any threat to the environment.
- **Disaster/Emergency Plan** - During the CNMP process, you will develop safety plans to deal with emergencies –a person or animal falling into a manure pit, toxic spills, manure overflows, injuries or fire.
- **Improve efficiency with CNMP**, in managing nutrients, feed management, new building plans. CNMP can also help provide better and more consistent training for farm employees.
- **Prepare for expansion.** A CNMP can provide you with much of the information needed to obtain a permit to expand your dairy or livestock operation beyond 500 Animal Units under the Wisconsin Livestock Siting law, or 1000 Animal Units under NR-243.
- A CNMP can help during a **transition of ownership** by detailing the existing environmental protection practices in effect and providing appropriate engineering documentation for their design and maintenance.
- A CNMP can help as a livestock farmer looks to downsize or shift to a less intensive operation. This may include abandonment of manure storage structures and changes to feed storage and harvesting.
- Lending institutions and insurance companies may review farm/facility safety and environmental hazards in determining financial risk, loans or rates.
- Be a good neighbor and a good steward of the land and water.

What are the components of a CNMP?

Record Keeping – amount of manure produced, spread, soil and manure tests

CNMP Narrative

Feed Management Needs and Evaluation

Upland Conservation Plan - to control erosion and reduce runoff

Evaluation of Existing Waste Management System

Nutrient Management Plan – nutrient needs and manure spreading plan for crop fields

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