



Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations

NRCS Nevada Fact Sheet

Financial and Technical Assistance Available to CAFO Owners/Operators

BACKGROUND

On December 15, 2002, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Administrator signed the revised National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) and Effluent Limitation Guidelines (ELG) Rule affecting concentrated animal feeding operations (CAFO). The revised Rule contains changes that will affect mostly large livestock and poultry operations nationwide. The Rule now requires CAFO operators to develop and implement a nutrient management plan as a permit requirement.

Comprehensive nutrient management plans (CNMP's) developed by the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) satisfy EPA's nutrient management plan requirements. Technical and financial assistance is available to USDA conservation program participants from the NRCS to help them plan and implement CNMP's for CAFO's.

WHAT IS A CAFO?

Animal feeding operations (AFO's) confine animals for at least 45 days in a 12-month period, and have no grass or other vegetation in the confinement area. For example, most dairies and cattle feedlots are AFO's. AFO's include operations that confine dairy cows, cattle, calves, swine, horses, sheep/lambs, turkeys, laying hens, chickens, or ducks. However, pasture or grazing-based operations are not AFO's unless they have feedlots, barns, or pens that meet the conditions described above to be defined as an AFO.

AFO's are not regulated by this program unless they are CAFO's. According to EPA, AFO's are defined as CAFO's when they:

- are over a certain size, or
- have a stream running through the facility, or
- discharge waste into a water of the United States.

The Nevada Division of Environmental Protection, agricultural producers, and others are working on a definition of CAFO that will fit Nevada. In the meantime, NRCS is ready to assist AFO/CAFO managers with development of Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plans (CNMP's). A CNMP describes the proper methods to dispose of animal waste. NRCS can provide technical assistance to help plan for adequate manure and wastewater storage, and provide information on financial assistance that may be available through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) or Agricultural Management Assistance (AMA) Program.

EPA'S CAFO RULE

Major changes made by EPA in its revised CAFO Rule include:

- All large CAFO's must apply for an NPDES permit.
- New source poultry, swine, and veal operations, as defined by EPA in the Rule, must meet a "no discharge" standard. This standard only allows for discharge from the production area in the event of a 100-year, 24-hour storm or greater.

CAFO's covered by a NPDES permit are required to develop and implement a site-specific nutrient management plan. EPA estimates that approximately 15,500 livestock and poultry operations will be required to obtain NPDES permits under the revised rule. This estimate includes 11,000 large operations, and 4,500 medium-size operations that meet certain conditions as defined by EPA in the Rule.

FINANCIAL AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

The 2002 Farm Bill offers several voluntary conservation programs that can be used by livestock and poultry producers to help them comply with the revised CAFO Rule. NRCS provides technical assistance to AFO/CAFO operators through conservation planning, design, and implementation. NRCS can help producers develop CNMP's for their operations, to meet the CAFO Rule's nutrient management requirements. This assistance is provided free of charge. **Personal information and records, such as nutrient and pesticide applications, are kept confidential by NRCS.**

Producers also may obtain assistance from Technical Service Providers (TSP's). TSP's are individuals, entities, or public agencies certified by the NRCS and placed on a list of approved TSP's by State. TSP's may provide technical services to program participants directly or through NRCS. Only those TSP's who are certified for specific categories of technical services and are included on the approved list may receive payments for technical services provided. Visit the NRCS "TechReg" Web site (<http://techreg.usda.gov>) for information on certification and to locate certified TSP's working in Nevada.

Financial assistance to implement practices and systems is available through:

- **Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)**
Provides cost-share funds to assist producers with implementing conservation systems and addressing regulatory requirements.
- **Agricultural Management Assistance Program (AMA)**
Provides cost-share funds to assist producers with implementing conservation systems and addressing regulatory requirements.
- **Additional Farm Bill Programs**
Other conservation programs may support CAFO operators in their efforts to implement a well-rounded conservation plan. These programs include:
 - Conservation Reserve Program
 - Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program
 - Wetlands Reserve Program
 - Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program
 - There may be State and local cost-share programs available to support CAFO operators.

For information on the State of Nevada's rules and regulations for AFO/CAFO's, contact:

Bureau of Water Pollution Control
Nevada Division of Environmental Protection
901 South Stewart Street, Suite 4001
Carson City NV 89701-5249
Phone: 775-687-4670 Fax: 775-687-6396

FOR MORE INFORMATION

NRCS OFFICES IN NEVADA

Caliente	775-726-3101
Elko	775-738-8431
Ely	775-289-4065
Fallon	775-423-5124
Lovelock	775-273-2134
Minden	775-782-3661
Las Vegas	702-262-9047
Winnemucca	775-623-5025
Yerington	775-463-2265

For more information about the CAFO Rule, visit EPA's CAFO Rule Web site at <http://cfpub2.epa.gov/npdes/afo/cafofinalrule.cfm>.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

AFO—Animal Feeding Operation

AMA—Agricultural Management Assistance Program

CAFO—Concentrated Animal Feeding Operation

CNMP—Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan

ELG—Effluent Limitation Guidelines

EQIP—Environmental Quality Incentives Program

NPDES—National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System

TMDL—Total Maximum Daily Load

TSP—Technical Service Providers



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