NRCS Air Quality Update

USDA AAQTF Meeting – Washington, DC
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Air Quality Engineer – NRCS AQAC Team
NRCS and Air Quality

• Natural Resources Conservation Service
  – Conservation agency
    • Non-regulatory
  – Not a research agency
    • Rely on our friends at ARS, NIFA, FS, universities
  – Work with agricultural producers to accomplish natural resource objectives via voluntary conservation efforts
NRCS Structure

- National office/centers
  - Overall policy, technology development, etc.

- State offices
  - State Conservationist responsible for activities in each state
  - State Technical Advisory Committees have significant input into priorities in the state

- Area offices
  - Area staff responsible for activities in their area
  - Report to State Conservationist

- Field offices
  - District Conservationists responsible for direct farmer interaction
  - Report to area office or directly to state office
  - Work with local conservation districts
NRCS and Air Quality

• National Air Quality and Atmospheric Change Technology Development Team
  – Greg Johnson – Team Leader
  – Greg Zwicke – Air Quality Engineer

• National Environmental Markets and Energy Team
  – Adam Chambers – Co-team Leader

• State AQ Contacts
  – CA
    • Ted Strauss – CA NRCS Air Quality Director
    • Johnnie Siliznoff – CA NRCS Air Quality Specialist
NRCS and Air Quality

• NRCS Air Quality Support
  – Evelyn Johnson – Administrative Assistant
NRCS AQ Resource Concerns

• Emissions of Particulate Matter (PM) and PM Precursors
• Emissions of Ozone Precursors
• Objectionable Odors
• Emissions of Greenhouse Gases
NRCS Conservation Planning

• 9 steps, but basically:
  – Identify resource issues
  – Apply a suite of *conservation practices* to holistically address those resource issues without causing other issues
NRCS Conservation Practices

• 165 existing official conservation practice standards
  – About 50 have a specific AQ-related purpose
  – 5 primary AQ-focused practices

• Conservation practices are not control technologies, but can include application of control technologies
Primary NRCS AQ Practices

- Air Filtration and Scrubbing (Code 371)
- Combustion System Improvement (Code 372)
- Dust Control on Unpaved Roads and Surfaces (Code 373)
- Dust Control from Animal Activity on Open Lot Surfaces (Code 375)
- Field Operations Emissions Reduction (Code 376)

http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detailfull/national/technical/nra/nri/?&cid=nrcs143_026849
USDA-EPA Agricultural AQ Conservation Measures Guide

- Compilation of conservation measures for addressing NAAQS pollutants and precursors for cropping systems and general land management

- Working on a companion document for livestock systems
USDA-EPA Agricultural Ammonia Workgroup

- AAQTF recommended that USDA and EPA collaborate on issues related to agricultural ammonia
- Greg Johnson (NRCS) and Robin Dunkins (EPA) lead the group
  - Participation from other EPA, NRCS, and ARS folks
National Air Quality Initiative

- 2008 Farm Bill included provisions for using EQIP to assist producers with air quality resource concerns and to meet Federal, State, and local regulatory requirements
  - Originally targeted solely to nonattainment areas
- Now, NRCS state offices apply for funds to address various agricultural air quality issues
National Air Quality Initiative

- 3 funding pools
  - National nonattainment
  - Regional air quality
  - State air quality
- Funds awarded based on:
  - Addressing nonattainment pollutants or precursors in a nonattainment area
  - Addressing an existing or potential Federal, State, or local air quality regulatory requirement related to agricultural sources
  - Involvement of significant partner participation

Questions?