

FARMANAC

A Newsletter to help Farmers Achieve Resource Management



Upcoming Events!!!

Saturday, October 18, 2014 9:00AM- 4:00PM

Berks Agricultural Resource Network's (BARN) 2014 Tour "Farming the Twin Valley"; Tour maps can be purchased at 8:30 AM on the day of the tour at Weaver's Orchard or Twin Valley High School. Please call 610-898-5482 for more information..

Tues and Wed, November 18 &19, 2014 6:00PM - 9:00PM

Berks County Conservation District Manure Management Manual Workshop. At Village Library, Morgantown, PA. If you have any questions contact Rita Seidel at 610-372-4657 ext. 207.

Wednesday, December 31, 2014

2015 Application deadline for the Berks County's Agricultural Conservation Easement Program; please call 610-378-1844 for more information.

Thursday, February 26, 2015 8:30 AM – 3:30 PM

Berks County Conservation District 2015 Innovative Agricultural Workshop "Growing your Operation"; You can sign up for the event through Survey Monkey, <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/YWSNYBT>, or by calling the Conservation District at 610-372-4657 ext. 210.

Funding is Here to Help You! Kathryn Keppen

The Berks County Conservation District (BCCD) is a local agency, authorized by the Commonwealth, to serve the community in protecting soil and water resources. Our staff can provide technical assistance to you and your farm if you have questions related to manure, soil health, and other related natural resources. It makes sense---having a healthy functioning natural resource environment will help your farm be more productive. The BCCD can also assist with identifying and procuring funds to help you implement practices that help address your natural resource concerns by preventing Nonpoint Source (NPS) pollution from occurring. Various funding programs exist in which farmers can participate that can help with the cost to install practices that protect our natural resources. Both the Federal and State government, as well as various non-governmental organizations, offer funding programs that provide cost-share, technical assistance, and economic incentives to implement NPS pollution management practices. Funding assistance can take various forms; check the chart for more information. If you have questions or wish to learn more, please call the Berks County Conservation District at 610-372-4657 at ext. 211.

	Example Program	% of Funding	Description
Loans	PENNVEST, Farm Service Agency (various programs)	varies	Just like loans you would get from the bank, there are loans to install practices that protect the environment. These loans are typically low interest loans.
Grants	Growing Greener, Schuylkill River Restoration Fund, Coldwater Heritage Partnership	50% - 85%	Grants require an application and usually a "match" that shows the landowner or partners have other committed funds for the project. You do not have to pay money back to the grantor as you would with a loan.
Cost-Sharing	Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)	50% - 75%	One of the more popular ways to have practices installed is through cost-sharing programs. This means you enter into an agreement to pay for a portion of the practice and the contracting agency pays for the rest. Cost-sharing typically covers 50% -75% depending on the project.
Tax Incentives	Resource Enhancement and Protection (REAP)	50% - 75%	Gives tax credits up to \$150,000. There are three possible ways to participate in REAP. You can implement practices and receive state tax credits. You can sell the tax credits to another Pennsylvania taxpayer. Or a sponsor can finance someone else's practices and receive the tax credits.
Vouchers	BCCD/Stroud Partnership	varies	If you are interested in installing trees along a stream on your property (one of the best and cheapest ways to protect our water resources), the BCCD can help. For every acre you plant with trees that are within 35 feet of a stream you can receive a voucher of up to \$4,000 to help install other resource conserving practices.

BERKS COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT



Berks County Conservation District

1238 County Welfare Road
Suite 200 Leesport, PA 19533

Conservation Corner Olivia Carlson

Nonpoint Source (NPS) pollution results when small amounts of contaminants from a large number of sources are carried by rainfall runoff into streams, lakes, or bays. For example, pollutants may be washed off lawns, construction areas, farms, or highways during a heavy rain and carried to a nearby creek.

Being stewards of the land gives us a big responsibility of maintaining our natural resources. For example, we all like to enjoy clean streams for fishing and clean water our livestock to drink.

- Soil test lawns and crop fields to make sure we are not over applying nutrients.

- Grow cover crops so the nutrients will be used by the plant instead of washing off.
- Plant vegetated areas around streams to capture sediment, nutrients, and pollutants.
- Direct roof water away from exposed soil or manure, to keep water clean.
- Recycle old equipment, appliances, vehicles, or scrap metal.



It is never too late to start taking these steps so that we can all enjoy our resources for future generations.

Hot Topic for the Cold Months, CAFO Winter Spreading Joshua Hanna

For those of you who may not already know, the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (PA DEP) now requires all Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs) to notify them seven days prior to land application of manure during “winter.” Winter is defined as the period from December 15 until February 28, if the soil is frozen four or more inches deep, or if there is snow on the ground, as outlined in the Act 38 Program (only one of the scenarios needs to apply).

The PA DEP has stated the purpose for this notification is to collect information on frequency and location, and to certify that spreading is consistent with an approved Nutrient Management Plan which will help to maintain high yields and save money on the use of fertilizers while reducing Non point Source (NPS) pollution.

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has been Pennsylvania and the surrounding EPA Region 3 states to adopt a total ban on winter spreading across the board. Region 3 encompasses Delaware, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia, West Virginia and Washington DC. The PA DEP has been stressing that Pennsylvania's agriculture is much different than the rest of Region 3. Animal operations in Maryland and Delaware primarily consist of poultry operations and as a result can realistically stack manure until spring arrives. Pennsylvania has a large number of dairy and swine operations where manure is collected as a liquid and cannot be stacked.



The PA DEP realizes that if everyone had sufficient storage to last over the winter, there would be little need to spread in the winter, however that is not the case. Building a manure storage can be a costly endeavor that some people just cannot afford.

The PA DEP is making it mandatory for CAFOs to report their winter spreading to build up documentation on why Pennsylvania's agricultural diversity deserves to be treated differently instead of totally banning winter spreading altogether. The application for CAFO Winter Period Application can be found on the DEP website and the form can either be mailed to the DEP or emailed seven days prior to the anticipated land application of manure.