



# Farmanac

A Newsletter to help Farmers Achieve Resource Management

## Get your Act 38 together early this year! By Rita Seidel

In the past, Nutrient Management Plan (NMP) submission and approval under Act 38 (Pennsylvania's Nutrient and Odor Management program) was recommended before the crop year started (October 1) but a 3 - month "grace period" until December 31 was generally allowed.

Since the review and approval process for a NMP can take up to 90 days (and in certain situations even longer), submitting a plan in December often resulted in plans not getting approved until the crop year was half over. This prompted a recent change in the NMP submission deadline that will go into effect in 2015. The new guidance reads:

*"The plan must be submitted and approved prior to the crop year it is to cover. If the plan is not approved before the crop year begins, **no manure applications are allowed to occur before plan approval.** Any manure applications made during a crop year, when there is not an approved plan, are not in compliance with the law."*

For example, your NMP is being written for crop years 2016, 2017 and 2018. The actual calendar plan dates are October 1, 2015 – September 30, 2018. In order for any manure to be applied after October 1, 2015, the NMP must be submitted to the conservation district in sufficient time (at least 90 days prior to October 1, e.g. **May 30** or earlier).

Most plan writers should be aware of this change, however, as the responsible party under Act 38, the **farmer / operator** needs to make sure that NMPs are submitted and approved prior to the beginning of the crop year, that is prior to October 1. Contact your plan writer as soon as possible if your current plan ends in 2015.

Now might also be a good time to look over and remind yourself of the records that you need to keep for your NMP and Manure Management Plan (MMP). See the insert in this newsletter for a list to keep handy with your files.

If you have any questions, feel free to contact one of our Agricultural Resource Conservationists:

**Christine Griesemer:** 610-372-4657 Ext. 210 or [Christine.Griesemer@berkscd.com](mailto:Christine.Griesemer@berkscd.com)

**Jeff Overstreet:** 610-372-4657 Ext. 206 or [Jeff.Overstreet@berkscd.com](mailto:Jeff.Overstreet@berkscd.com)

**Olivia Carlson:** 610-372-4657 Ext. 208 or [Olivia.Carlson@berkscd.com](mailto:Olivia.Carlson@berkscd.com)

**Rita Seidel:** 610-372-4657 Ext. 207 or [Rita.Seidel@berkscd.com](mailto:Rita.Seidel@berkscd.com)



## Upcoming Events

Penn State Extension Herbicide Resistance Workshop, presented by Penn State Extension Specialists is scheduled for **March 17, 2015** 10 am to 2 pm., at the Marion Township Fire Hall, Womelsdorf, PA 19567. Light lunch. Limited to 50 growers. Cost: \$20.00. For registration information call Penn State Extension-Berks County 610-378-1327 or register on-line by March 10, 2015 at <http://extension.psu.edu/plants/crops>. Click on the "Upcoming Events" link on the right hand side of the page.

Penn State Extension Pesticide Update is scheduled for **March 23, 2015** 10 to Noon, and 7-9 pm at the Berks County Agricultural Center. Offering 2 core and 2 category points. Cost: \$10.00. No preregistration required.

Berks County Conservation District Annual Tree Seedling Sale is scheduled for **April 17, 2015** from 9:00 am to 8:00 pm at the Berks County Agricultural Center (1238 County Welfare Road Leesport PA 19533). We will have extra seedlings on hand for purchase the day of the sale.

Berks County Conservation District and Farm Service Agency Annual Conservation Awards and Scholarship Banquet is scheduled for **April 27, 2015**. Doors open at 6:00 pm, program begins 6:30pm at Haag's Hotel in Shartlesville PA. The cost of the event is \$20.00 for adults and \$8.00 children 5-12. You can purchase your tickets by calling the District at 610-372-4657 ext. 200.



### Berks County Conservation District

1238 County Welfare Road

Suite 200 Leesport, PA 19533

## Invite a friend to the District's Next Manure Management Manual Workshop!

By Caitlin Heffner



All farms that generate or spread manure, including those with as few as one horse, goat, or sheep, are required to have a written manure management plan. Manure management is vital to preserve the environment – manure can easily contaminate water if it is not properly stored or applied. The plan describes manure production, storage, and application rates. DEP's "Land Application of Manure" publication contains the manure management plan workbook and an explanation of how to complete each section. It will help landowners identify environmentally sensitive areas on their property and surrounding properties so they can better stack or store their manure, identify animal concentration areas on their farm to help reduce the size to prevent runoff, and explain how to manage pasture. All of these factors will reduce runoff and prevent it from depositing excess nutrients into water.

The manure management plan needs to be kept for your records: no government agency is required to review it or have it on file. The plan can be prepared by the farmer; however, it is often easier to seek assistance from those trained in manure management to fill in the workbook.

On **Saturday, April 11<sup>th</sup> 2015**, the Berks County Conservation District will host a **FREE** Manure Management Workshop to assist landowners in completing their workbooks. The event will be held at **Hoss's Steak and Sea House in Leesport (121 Center Ave, Leesport, PA 19533)** from **10am-4pm**. Light refreshments will be provided in the morning and a complimentary Hoss's lunch is included. To sign-up, contact Caitlin Heffner at 610-372-4657 x 204 or email [Caitlin.heffner@berkscd.com](mailto:Caitlin.heffner@berkscd.com).

Remember to bring a pencil, calculator, and an aerial photograph or map of your property on the day of the event. Contact the Conservation District if you need assistance preparing your map. Each participant will receive a blank workbook (the Manure Management Plan), a free soil sample kit, and complimentary lunch. Agricultural technicians will teach participants what the regulations mean, how to complete each step of the workbook, and how to implement the plan. Everyone who plans to attend must be present for the first half of the program beginning at 10am. The second half of the program will target only those who apply manure with a spreader - all others are free to leave after lunch. All attendees will walk out with a completed manure management plan or have the tools necessary to complete it on their own.