AgNews DELAWARE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

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AGRICULTURE

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Nutrient Management Commission's annual report released

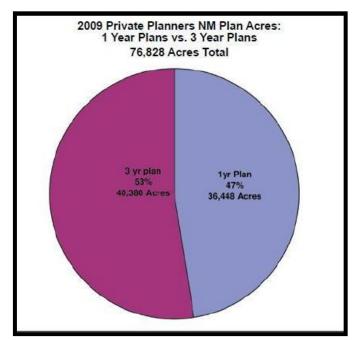
On April 1, the Delaware Nutrient Management Commission released its Annual Report to Governor Markell and the Delaware General Assembly. The report details the 2009 accomplishments of the Delaware Nutrient Management Program. According to the Report, "Nutrient management continues to be a very important topic for farmers, nutrient handlers, state officials, federal officials and the general public. The level of attention facing animal production, crop production and general agriculture is unlike any time in history. Water quality is the focus of this attention and there is no more important time for the agricultural industry to join in demonstrating accountability for nutrient use. The 2009 Annual Report of the Delaware Nutrient Management Commission demonstrates a significant level of accountability and fulfills the requirements of the Nutrient Management Law."

In keeping with the Nutrient Management Law, all farmers and other nutrient handlers must develop and implement phosphorus limited nutrient management plans, maintain nutrient handling records, maintain nutrient certification, and submit an annual report.

Commission Chairman and Bridgeville dairy and grain farmer Bill Vanderwende said "I'm proud of the results generated by the Nutrient Management Law and the cooperation by the agricultural community." Secretary Ed Kee said "Farmers are demonstrating excellent environmental stewardship by employing best management practices such as adequate manure storage, vegetative buffers, water control structures, storm water management and more."

In the past several years, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has become much more interested in agriculture's influence on water quality and how Delaware officials, such as the Commission, were regulating nutrient runoff. EPA recognizes the success of the Nutrient Management Law but is very focused on two elements of the Clean Water Act called Concentrated Animal Feeding Operation (CAFO) permits and Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) limits. Both elements consist of EPA regulations that the States must address.

Highlights of the report include nutrient management certification continuing education classes for 3,260 participants, 326,830 acres of nutrient management planning assistance, 96,435 tons of excess poultry litter/manure relocated, three environmental stewardship awards, one excellence in crop advising award, 367 CAFO permits and many other updates on nutrient management related topics for Delaware.



A complete copy of the report is available on the web at:

http://www.dda.delaware.gov/nutrients/forms/200 9/2009 NM_AR.pdf or by calling 302.698.4500.

