

**INTERAGENCY NUTRIENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
MINUTES July 30, 2004**

Attendees

<u>NCDACS</u>	<u>NCSU</u>	<u>NCDSWC</u>	<u>NRCS</u>
R. Reich	D. Osmond	V. Cox	L. Price
D. Hardy	J. Green		R. Hansard
B. Walls			T. Cutts
			R. Vick

Discussion Items

1. The 1217 Committee referred a technical issue to the INMC to evaluate a potential modification to utilization factors used in nutrient management planning when animal waste is applied using AerWay equipment. In response to this request, a number of members of the INMC, along with specialists from a number of technical agencies participated in a demonstration in Duplin County on May 14, 2004. John Havlin worked with staff at NCSU to draft a brief technical overview of the Aerway applicator relative to reducing nutrient losses. This overview does not recommend making changes to the nutrient management databases at this time when AerWay equipment is used. Because the effects of the technology on potential nutrient losses are unclear, and because data is lacking to support quantitative changes, the INMC concurred with the recommendation from Dr. Havlin. At this time, it is the opinion of the INMC that nutrient management planners should consider the system as a surface broadcast application.

ACTION: Lane Price will finalize a letter to the 1217 Committee with the decision of the INMC.

2. There was some discussion of the reference in the CAFO rule to the option available to states to identify some alternative BMPs (or BMP combinations) that would be considered "equivalent" to the 100 foot setback or 35 foot buffer requirement for the land application of animal waste from CAFO regulated operations. A potential example presented was the combined use of narrower filter strips/field borders and water table control structures on regularly drained fields in some parts of the coastal plain. It was discussed that this issue will likely surface in the future, and will be on the INMC agenda during 2004-2005. The Committee believes that the research and efforts of the P Technical Committee in developing PLAT should be used to document alternative systems.
3. Richard Reich gave an overview of NCDACS's efforts with DENR-DWQ and some local laboratories to implement certification procedures that would allow private labs to be certified by DENR for soil phosphorus. The NRCS 590 standard and USDA nutrient management policy requires that, to ensure consistency and accuracy, soil testing for nutrient management be performed by a laboratory certified by the state's certifying organization, if one exists. NCDACS drafted the guidelines in February 2004, and Richard reported that these procedures were released by DWQ on July 16, 2004. **ACTION: NCSU agreed to set up a page on the North Carolina nutrient management website regarding certification. This page will include a list of currently certified labs, and a link to the procedures and contacts needed acquire this certification.**

4. Jim Green and Roger Hansard discussed an emerging concern with respect to nutrient management plans. There are a number of operations across the state where producers have grasslands used for the application of animal waste from confined feeding operations. In many cases, livestock are used to graze these grasslands. In an apparently growing number of cases, the herd size grazing these areas is creeping upward, to the point where feed from outside sources is now being imported onto the farm to feed the growing herd. This essentially constitutes adding another source of nutrients to the overall nutrient budget on the operation, and per NRCS 590 standard, must accordingly be accounted for in the nutrient management plan.
ACTION: NRCS will prepare a technical note or similar documentation to reiterate to nutrient management planners that all sources of nutrients must be included in the conservation plan. This material will be distributed to the other members of the Committee for their use as appropriate.
5. Deanna Osmond provided an update on the current version of PLAT software, and their efforts to accommodate those who could not easily handle the automated Internet-based update procedures. In these cases, NCSU offers an update patch that can be emailed to PLAT users who will manually update PLAT software.
6. Richard Reich reported on an article that was recently published in Nutrient Cycling in Agroecosystems 69: 111-125, 2004. The article was titled "Spatial and temporal variability in excessive soil phosphorus levels in eastern North Carolina". David Hardy and other NCDACS staff have performed a technical review of the article. Because of the large number of inaccuracies within the article, and misuse of NCDACS's soil test data to justify its conclusions on the growing use of fertilizer in eastern North Carolina, NCDACS is preparing a letter to the publisher of the journal, Kluwer Academic Publishers. For example, the authors inappropriately compared soil test results across time, even though testing methodologies and protocol had changed several times during this span. The INMC, formed as a science-based Committee, continues to see an important role in ensuring that credible and defensible information on nutrient management is available to the agricultural and environmental communities, as well as the public.

The next INMC meeting is scheduled for September 30, 2004 at 1:00 pm at NCDACS Agronomic Division.