

Utah Animal Feeding Operations Program Report:

**MANURE
MANAGEMENT
GRANTS**

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SALT LAKE CITY — Two years after the 2001 Utah Legislature authorized the state's first manure management grants, the state's proactive approach to agricultural nonpoint source pollution is widely recognized as a national model.

“The Utah approach was ideally what EPA would like to see across the country. We have held it up as an example.” said Debra H. Thomas, EPA Region 8 Water Programs Team Leader. The EPA issued new Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFO) rules in December 2002, but Utah should have no problem coming into full compliance by the 2006 deadline thanks to its proactive approach.

The Utah Legislature anticipating agriculture operators would need financial assistance to correct problems and come into compliance with stricter water quality guidelines had earlier appropriated \$340,000 to the Utah Department of Agriculture and Food for grants to owners of animal feeding operations. Matched by landowners and federal programs, 41 projects totalling over \$2 million are now underway. The initial 30 projects will be completed this year.

New funding for Utah in the 2002 Farm Bill will continue to address agricultural nonpoint source pollution. “We expect significant increases in the USDA Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) for improvements to animal feeding operations.” said Phillip Nelson, Natural Resources Conservation Service State Conservationist.

The first phase of Utah's Animal Feeding Operation Strategy was to inventory livestock operations. As of November 2002, 1,656 animal feeding operations have been inventoried. Of those, 50 large or CAFOs are now permitted by the Utah Division of Water Quality, one additional CAFO has recently been identified, 236 are potential CAFOs that require changes in operation or improvements to protect water quality, 1,149 have no apparent problems and 220 did not qualify. An estimated 1,067 operations remain to be assessed. The cost of the inventory and related assistance when finished will total nearly \$1 million. The assessments



This Cache Valley dairy project included a cement bunker (top photo) to contain manure and milk house waste

have been voluntary, confidential and have assisted Utah agricultural producers get ahead of what could become punitive regulation.

All potential CAFOs will require some level of planning from simple descriptions of improvements needed to Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plans. Every operation is encouraged to voluntarily prepare a nutrient management plan to guide landowners in handling and application of manure. Most landowners are assisted by their local soil conservation district and the Natural Resources Conservation Service.

PARTNER AGENCIES AND ORGANIZATIONS

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| Utah Association of Conservation Districts | Utah Farm Bureau |
| Natural Resources Conservation Service | Utah Dairymen's Association |
| Utah Department of Agriculture and Food | Utah livestock & poultry producers |
| Utah Division of Water Quality | Soil Conservation Districts |
| Utah State University Extension | |

For more information go to: www.uacd.org/water/index.html