

# LPE Center News



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**In this issue:**

- *June Webcast: Mortality Management Options for Small Farms.....1*
- *Mortality Management Resources.....1*
- *Report Examines Changes in Hog Manure Management.....2*
- *Organic Dairy Manure May Offer Fertilizer Advantage.....2*

LPE Learning Center Webcast Series

**Looking Forward to the June Webcast:**

## Mortality Management Options for Small Farms

Cow-calf and dairy producers are likely to be impacted by a recent FDA rule that will require rendering or meat processing facilities to remove the brain and spinal cord from carcasses of large ruminants over 30 months old.

This is likely to lead to a significant increase in the cost in rendering services, or even elimination of service in some areas. Are there other environmentally responsible methods of managing mortalities? Are these other methods economically feasible and practical for smaller farms?

The June 19, 2009 webcast will discuss the FDA rule, its potential implications and the questions producers should consider when developing their mortality management plans.



**Date/Time (Tentative):** Friday, June 19, 2009, at 2:30 pm (EDT)/1:30 pm (CDT)/12:30 pm (MDT)/11:30 am (PDT).

**How to Participate:** On the day of the webcast, go to [http://www.extension.org/pages/Live\\_Webcast\\_Information](http://www.extension.org/pages/Live_Webcast_Information). First-time viewers should follow the steps at [http://www.extension.org/pages/How\\_Do\\_I\\_Participate\\_in\\_a\\_Webcast?](http://www.extension.org/pages/How_Do_I_Participate_in_a_Webcast?) a few days before the webcast to ensure they will be able to access the virtual meeting room.

**May Webcast**  
"Proposed Ruling Would Require Reporting of Greenhouse Gas Emissions"  
May 15, 2009, at 2:30 pm (EST) [More...](#)

What's Going On In the LPE Learning Center?

**LPELC Home page:**  
<http://www.extension.org>  
and click on "Animal Manure Management."

**Continuing Education Units** are available through the Certified Crop Adviser program and American Registry of Professional Animal Scientists [More...](#)

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## Mortality Management Resources

Despite best efforts, every livestock and poultry operation, large or small, has to make decisions about managing dead animals. Every operation should consider how they will manage normal numbers of mortalities, but producers should also consider how they will manage a catastrophic situation resulting from power outages, storms or bioterrorism.

The LPE Learning Center has two resources on this topic. The Storage, Handling and Mortality Management team has developed an introduction to this topic that outlines acceptable, as well as unacceptable, methods for managing mortalities. It also includes links to additional information. The page is located at:

[http://www.extension.org/pages/Managing\\_Livestock\\_and\\_Poultry\\_Mortalities](http://www.extension.org/pages/Managing_Livestock_and_Poultry_Mortalities). An in-depth fact sheet available through the Livestock and Poultry Environmental Stewardship (LPES) Curriculum: Lesson 51- Mortality Management, [http://pubwiki.extension.org/mediawiki/files/a/a8/LES\\_51.pdf](http://pubwiki.extension.org/mediawiki/files/a/a8/LES_51.pdf)

Many states have rules related to disposal of carcasses. Producers should consult their state Cooperative Extension Service or State Department of Agriculture for state-specific guidelines.

## Report Examines Changes in Hog Manure Management

A new report from the USDA's Economic Research Service uses data from two national surveys of hog producers to examine how manure management practices have evolved over time, as well as with scale of production. The years in consideration were 1998 through 2004, and of note are the effects of structural changes, recent policies on manure management technologies and practices, the use of nutrient management plans, and manure application rates.

The report shows that, in recent years, structural changes such as increased farm size and regional shifts in production have altered manure management practices. Additional factors include changes to the Clean Water Act and state regulations, as well as a rising number of local conflicts over air quality issues and odor.

The findings suggest that larger hog operations are altering their manure management decisions in response to binding nutrient application constraints and that environmental



policy is contributing to the adoption of conservation compatible manure management practices. To read the report, which was released in March, go to <http://www.ers.usda.gov/Publications/EIB50/>.

### Spotlight On...

## Organic Dairy Manure May Offer Fertilizer Advantage

Dairy cows that produce USDA-certified organic milk also produce manure that may gradually replenish soil nutrients and potentially reduce the flow of agricultural pollutants to nearby water sources, according to findings by scientists and colleagues with the USDA's Agricultural Research Service (ARS).

Cows on organic dairy farms generally consume forage feeds cultivated on soils that are fertilized with manure and compost rather than manufactured fertilizers. This organic management in turn may significantly affect how easily nutrients are converted in soil into forms readily taken up by crops.

Working with colleagues at the ARS New England Plant, Soil, and Water Laboratory in Orono, Maine, and elsewhere, chemist Zhongqi He showed how conventional and organic dairy manures from commercial dairy farms differed in concentrations of plant nutrients, including phosphorus, metals, and minerals.

The researchers found that the two types of manure had at least 17 different chemical forms of phosphorus that varied in concentration. The organic dairy manure had higher levels of phosphorus, calcium, potassium, manganese, zinc, and magnesium. Organic dairy manure also contained more types of phosphorus found in association with calcium and magnesium. Such forms are comparatively slow to dissolve

and would thus gradually release the nutrients. Slow-release fertilizers generally increase the likelihood that they eventually will be taken up by crops, rather than being washed out of fields into nearby surface or groundwater sources. Because of this, slow-release fertilizers often can be applied at comparatively low rates.

Manure produced by cows in organic production systems may show similar characteristics compared to manure from conventional systems.

### Upcoming Conference

The Texas Animal Manure Management Issues Conference is scheduled for September 29-30 in Round Rock. Topics include manure nutrients, water and air quality, bioenergy and value-added products, AFO siting and manure management systems, and lessons learned from Hurricane Ike on the disposal of catastrophic animal mortality. For more information, go to <http://grovesite.com/tamu/tammi>.



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