

Nebraska EXTENSION Know how. Know **now.**

Managing Manure on Small Farms

Chris Henry, PE
Extension Engineer
University of Nebraska-Lincoln



Nebraska EXTENSION Know how. Know **now.**

Why are small farms important...

- The USDA defines a farm as *'any operation that produces and sells, or could sell, at least \$1,000 worth of agricultural production'*.
- Did you know that 59 percent of U.S. farms sell less than \$10,000 worth of agricultural production?
- There are more than 1 million operations, selling less than \$5,000 worth of production.

University of Nebraska-Lincoln Source: Gene Danekas, Director
USDA Missouri Agricultural Statistics Service




Nebraska EXTENSION Know how. Know **now.**

What is a Small Farm?

- **Residential/lifestyle farms.**
 - Most income is off-farm.
- **Retirement farms.**
 - Operators are retired.
- **Limited-resource farms.**
 - < \$100,000 & impoverished.
- **Farming occupation/low-sales.**
 - < \$100,000 income
- **Farming occupation/high-sales.**
 - Sales between \$100,000 and \$249,999

University of Nebraska-Lincoln Source: United States Department of Agriculture
See also <http://www.extension.org>



Nebraska **EXTENSION** Know how. Know **now.**

If we are a regulator we may call a small farm...

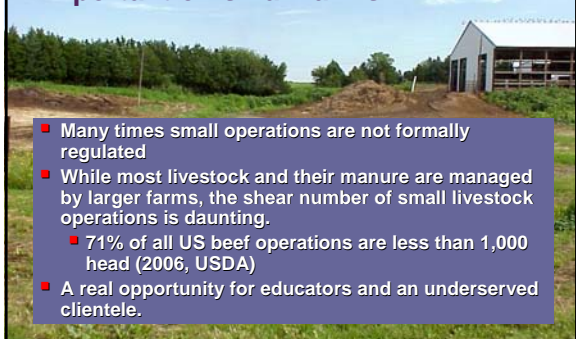
Small	Medium
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <300 head of beef, veal, or dairy heifers <200 dairy cattle <750 swine (>55 lbs) <3,000 swine (<55 lbs) <16,500 Turkeys <37,500 chickens <3,000 sheep <150 horses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <999 head of beef, veal, or dairy heifers <699 dairy cattle <2,499 swine (>55 lbs) <9,999 swine (<55 lbs) <54,999 Turkeys <124,999 chickens <9,999 sheep <499 horses

According to the EPA, there are approximately 450,000 AFOs in the United States

What do you think is a small farm?



Why is manure management important on small farms...



- Many times small operations are not formally regulated
- While most livestock and their manure are managed by larger farms, the sheer number of small livestock operations is daunting.
 - 71% of all US beef operations are less than 1,000 head (2006, USDA)
- A real opportunity for educators and an underserved clientele.













Nebraska UNIVERSITY OF EXTENSION **Know how. Know now.**



End Game: Good Stewardship of the Land
While small, can have great impact

Small Livestock Producer Challenges




- Diversified farms (Irrigation, ranching, feedlot, town job, etc.)
- Young families (Most of our producers have children in school)
- Time commitment to manure management minimum
- Producers not in touch with their livestock waste regulations and responsibilities
- Limited resources developed for this sector
- Producers want to do the right thing

Nebraska UNIVERSITY OF EXTENSION **Know how. Know now.**

Challenges to consider...

- Traditional educational approaches are less successful
- Solutions that work for large livestock operations, may not be appropriate for small farms.
- Technical Service Providers may need specialized training in this area

University of Nebraska-Lincoln 

Nebraska UNIVERSITY OF EXTENSION **Know how. Know now.**

This webcast will answer these questions...

- How do I develop a nutrient management plan for a small farm?
- What resources are available to small farms?

University of Nebraska–Lincoln 