

Illinois Farmers as Nutrient Stewards: Opportunities via the Illinois Nutrient Loss Reduction Strategy

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Agricultural Stakeholder Involvement

- Stakeholders met August 2013 - May 2014:
 - Illinois Department of Agriculture
 - Illinois Farm Bureau
 - Illinois Pork Producers Association
 - Illinois Fertilizer and Chemical Association
 - Illinois Corn Growers Association
 - Association of Illinois Soil and Water Conservation Districts
 - University of Illinois Extension
 - NRCS



Agricultural Nonpoint Sources

- Includes recommended BMPs shown through peer reviewed research to reduce nutrient losses
 - In-field (split application of N, cover crops, reduced tillage)
 - Edge of field (bioreactors, wetlands)
 - Land use changes (perennial crops)
- Information on costs and estimated reductions/acre for N and P
- Combination scenarios of BMPs to see large scale reductions

Agricultural Nonpoint Sources

- Livestock operations - BMPs included for:
 - Land application of manure
 - Runoff management from production areas

Key Nutrient Reduction Programs for Nonpoint Sources

- Focus on building upon existing programs and resources
- Reinvigoration of voluntary conservation adoption and nutrient management
- New focus on tracking implementation of BMPs and resulting water quality impacts
- No “one size fits all” approach for all of Illinois agriculture



Key Nutrient Reduction Programs for Nonpoint Sources

- State Programs

- IEPA

- Section 319 grant program
 - Illinois Green Infrastructure Grant

- IDNR

- Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program

- IDOA

- Partners for Conservation Cost-Share (allocated annually to SWCDs)



Key Nutrient Reduction Programs for Nonpoint Sources

- Federal Programs

- NRCS

- Environmental Quality Incentives Program
 - Conservation Stewardship Program
 - Easement Programs (Agricultural Conservation Easement Program and Healthy Forests Reserve Program)

Key Nutrient Reduction Programs for Nonpoint Sources

- Illinois Agriculture Initiatives
 - Nutrient Research and Education Council
 - Council on Best Management Practices
 - Priority issue for the individual agricultural organizations and agribusinesses in Illinois



NREC

- Established by Illinois agriculture in 2012 - sustainable funding mechanism for nutrient research and education
- Assessment of 75 cents per ton of bulk fertilizer sold in the state. Primarily paid by farmers.
- Support projects and programs that address the role of nutrients in enhancing Illinois crop production while minimizing environmental impact



NREC

- Governed by 9 voting members:
 - 3 from grower organizations (IFB, ISA, ICGA)
 - 3 from fertilizer industry
 - 1 from specialty fertilizer industry
 - 1 from certified agronomy organization
 - IDOA Director or rep
- And 4 non-voting members:
 - 2 from environmental organizations
 - 1 rep from state/federal ag experiment station
 - IEPA Director or rep



NREC

- Annual funding to NREC between \$2-2.5 million
- 2014 is second year of funding
- Proposals for 2015 funding are due November 3.

NREC

- 2013 - first year projects were funded (7 total projects)
- 2014 - 15 projects funded totaling over \$2.55 million.
 - Mix of research and outreach programs
 - Examples -
 - CBMP KIC program
 - Agronomic and Environmental Assessment of Cover Crops
 - Nitrogen Management over Tile Trained Fields to Optimize Yields & Minimize Losses



Illinois Council on Best Management Practices

- Coalition of agricultural organizations and agribusinesses:
 - Illinois Farm Bureau, Illinois Corn Growers Association, Illinois Soybean Association, Illinois Pork Producers Association, Illinois Fertilizer and Chemical Association, Syngenta, GROWMARK and Monsanto
- New Executive Director starting this week!
- Mission is to assist and encourage adoption of BMPs to protect and enhance natural resources and the sustainability of agriculture in Illinois



CBMP Goals

- Information: Gather current and accurate information on effective/economically viable BMPs and programs
- Awareness: Increase awareness of water quality issues and BMPs
- Participation: Increase farmer participation in programs and adoption of BMPs
- Demonstration: Demonstrate loss reductions and progress on strategy goals



KIC Education and Outreach Program

- **CBMP's overarching educational program focusing on nutrients and water quality**
- Education: To farmers, agricultural retailers, general public and youth
- Training: Cover crop training
- Demonstration: On-farm and watershed projects
- Communication: Coalition of ag groups working together to share a single message (radio, print, websites - CBMP and individual organizations)



KIC Education and Outreach Program

- Although CBMP's educational efforts will be statewide, the on-farm demonstrations and watershed projects will focus in 8 priority watersheds:
 - Lake Bloomington watershed
 - Lake Evergreen watershed
 - Lake Decatur watershed
 - Lake Jacksonville watershed
 - Lake Vermilion watershed
 - Salt Fork Vermilion watershed
 - Vermilion River watershed
 - Lake Springfield watershed

KIC Education and Outreach Program

- One component - 4R Program
 - Nutrient stewardship program to reduce nutrient losses from agriculture, focusing on the 4Rs of Nutrient Use: Right Source, Right Rate, Right Time, Right Place
 - Seeks to educate farmers and suppliers to manage nutrients in a systematic approach throughout the growing season, rather than as a single application

KIC Education and Outreach Program

- KIC uses the following programs and tools to better educate farmers on the nitrogen cycle, nutrient uptake and optimum nitrogen rates for individual fields:
 - On-farm nitrogen rate trials
 - N-WATCH soil inventory and tracking program

Cover Crop Training Initiative

- Utilize 3 regional cover crop specialists to provide training, education and outreach to promote use of cover crops for nutrient management in production agriculture
- Cover crop specialists will:
 - Establish demonstration sites
 - Work with ag retailers, local SWCDs and IDOA to identify farmers statewide
 - Partner with Ag Departments at Community Colleges and establish network for education and outreach throughout the state



Ongoing Strategy Work

- Agricultural organizations will continue be part of the ongoing strategy work:
 - Committees (education and outreach, water quality monitoring, nutrient standards)
 - Public reporting
 - Future meetings of stakeholder group

Thank You

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