

# *Agriculture Newsletter*

## *Summer 2018*



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Graphic credit: Michigan Technological University

### **Agricultural Nonpoint Source Pollution & Your Watershed**

Nonpoint source (NPS) pollution cannot be pinpointed on a single source such as a pipe or a factory; it stems from many sources dispersed throughout a large area. As rain and snowmelt move across the land, it can pick up and carry contaminants to surface water and groundwater within a watershed; polluting our freshwater resources. Agricultural sources include nutrients from manure and fertilizer, pathogens from manure, pesticides, and sediment from animal heavy use areas, over-grazed pastures, and bare cropland.

#### **Watersheds**

The graphic on the lower left illustrates a watershed; an area of land where all the water flows to the same place. If each arrow represented a source of polluted runoff, it could result in significant impairment of the watershed as it collects downstream. Jefferson County falls within the Ohio River Watershed. The Clarion River, Mahoning Creek, and Redbank Creek are the three main waterways in the county flowing into it.



Graphic credit: [www.epa.gov](http://www.epa.gov)

## Impacts of Ag NPS Pollution

**Nutrients:** Excess phosphorous and nitrogen in water sources can result in an overabundance of algae growth; tainting drinking water sources, spoiling recreational activities, and cause fish kills as algae removes oxygen from the water. In addition, excess nitrate concentrations in drinking water can cause methemoglobinemia (Blue Baby Syndrome), a disease that prevents oxygen transport in the body; potentially fatal to infants and unborn children.

**Pathogens:** Bacteria, protozoa, and viruses from manure can be carried through runoff to water sources; sickening livestock and humans.

**Sediment:** Excess sediment clouds water; stifling fish larvae, suffocating fish by clogging their gills, and it prevents sunlight from reaching aquatic vegetation.

**Pesticides:** Excess pesticide use can result in the poisoning of organism not intended to be eradicated, cause adverse health problems in livestock and humans, contaminate food, and wipe out protective vegetative cover.

## Remediation/Prevention of Ag NPS Pollution

Start with your farm plans (Manure or Nutrient Management Plan, Agricultural Erosion & Sedimentation Control or Conservation Plan) These plans help organize and assess different aspects of your farm.

Below are a few best management practices (BMPs) to help protect your water resources, and improve the long-term productivity and profitability of your farm.

### Crop BMPs

- Cover Crops
- Contour Strips
- Field Borders
- Grassed Waterway
- Reduced Tillage/No-till
- Conservation Crop Rotation
- Integrated Pest Management
- Balancing nutrient application with crop needs (using soil and manure testing)
- Maintaining setbacks from water sources when applying nutrients and pesticides

### Pasture BMPs

- Rotational Grazing
- Stabilized Stream Crossings
- Streambank fencing
- Using a sustainable stocking rate
- Stockpiling Forage

### Farmstead BMPs

- Manure Storage Facilities
- Animal Heavy Use Protection
- Roof Runoff Structures
- Frequently removing manure from the barnyard
- Vegetated Treatment Area





## Ag Progress Days

### August 14 – 16, 2018

Tuesday (14th) 9:00 am–5:00 pm

Wednesday (15th) 9:00 am–8:00 pm

Thursday (16th) 9:00 am–4:00 pm

At the Russell E. Larson Agricultural Research Center, 2710 West Pine Grove Rd, Pennsylvania Furnace, PA. 9 miles SW of Penn State.

Sponsored by Penn State's College of Agricultural Sciences, Ag Progress Days features the following:

#### Demonstrations

- Field machinery and crops
- Horse training and health
- Home and farm safety
- Gardening and beekeeping
- Cooking and nutrition

#### Educational Presentations and Tours

- Dairy, livestock, and equine
- Field and forage
- Energy and environmental resources
- Horticulture
- Forest stewardship and wildlife management
- Crop management

#### Interactive Events and Activities

- Pasto Agricultural Museum and silent auction
- Educational exhibits & expert advice in the College Exhibits Building
- Health screenings and safety
- Healthy meals and cooking demonstrations
- Master Gardener flower and vegetable gardens

#### Youth and Family Fun

- 4-H program opportunities
- Friendly bugs, bunnies, and wildlife
- A-Maze-N Corn

Admission and parking are free. Visit [apd.psu.edu](http://apd.psu.edu) for more information.

## Jefferson County



The Jefferson County Fair in Brookville will be held **July 15 - July 21, 2018**. Be sure to stop by the Jefferson Conservation District's booth!

This year, the *H2Oh! on the Go!* Mobile Environmental Display will be available for viewing. It's an interactive, educational traveling exhibit used to promote the importance of conserving our natural resources. The mobile display is a creation of the Armstrong County Conservation District in partnership with the Colcum Foundation, the Carnegie Science Center, and the EQT Corporation.

#### Fair Schedule of Events

**Sun. July 15** – Opening Ceremonies at 1:30pm; Royalty Pageant; Mini & Full Horse Pulls

**Mon. July 16** – ATV "Racing" Extravaganza, Mini-Tractor Pulls

**Tues. July 17** – Full Pull Productions: Hot Farm Tractors, Street Gas 4x4, Mini Mod 4x4, 3.6 Diesel 4x4

**Wed. July 18** – Full Pull Productions: Limited Pro/ Super Farm Tractors, Super Street Gas 4x4, Street Diesel 4x4

**Thurs. July 19** – "Enhanced" Car & Truck Mud Bog

**Fri. July 20** – Rawhide Professional Rodeo with Full Roster of Events

**Sat. July 21** – Figure 8 race, Tuff Truck Races, Demo Derby

Visit [www.jeffcofair.com](http://www.jeffcofair.com) for all the details



## Farm Service Agency 2018 Acreage Reporting Dates

In order to comply with FSA program eligibility requirements, all producers are encouraged to visit their local FSA office to file an accurate crop certification report by the applicable deadline. The following acreage reporting dates are applicable for Pennsylvania:

- **June 15, 2018** – Spring Barley, Spring Forage Seeding, Spring Oats, Rye, Triticale, Spring Wheat
- **July 16, 2018** – Corn, Soybeans, Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) and all other crops
- **August 15, 2018**—Beans, Cabbage

The following exceptions apply to the above acreage reporting dates:

- If the crop has not been planted by the above acreage reporting date, then the acreage must be reported no later than 15 calendar days after planting is completed.
- If a producer acquires additional acreage after the above acreage reporting date, then the acreage must be reported no later than 30 calendar days after purchase or acquiring the lease. Appropriate documentation must be provided to the county office.



## Resource Enhancement And Protection (REAP) Program

The 2018-2019 REAP applications are anticipated to be available soon (July/August). Through this program, farmers can earn tax credits for implementing "Best Management Practices" (BMPs) that will enhance farm production and protect natural resources. You can visit <http://www.agriculture.pa.gov> for updates as they become available.

As a reminder, in order to apply, farmers need the following:

### 1.) Current Plans

Agricultural operations must have a current and up-to-date:

- Conservation Plan or Agricultural E&S Plan on all acres that are under managerial control at the time of application.
- Nutrient Management Plan (for a CAO or CAFO) or Manure Management Plan – required of all operations that have animals or utilize manure.

The written plans must be on-schedule for full implementation in order to be considered "current". The cost of developing and implementing these plans may be included to qualify for the tax credit.

2.) Properly Protected Barnyards: BMPs necessary to control nutrient and sediment runoff from ACAs must be fully implemented AND/OR the implementation of these BMPs must be included in the application.

3.) On-schedule for Full Implementation of Crop Field and other NM BMPs. An agricultural operation with uncompleted BMPs required in an Conservation/Ag E&S Plan and/or a Nutrient Management/Manure Management Plan must be following the schedule for full implementation listed in those plans.