



MPCA Feedlot Program Update



Working with agriculture on efficient and effective solutions for environmental stewardship

Nov. 17, 2010

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Elections, data, inspection form, funding topics at convention

Dan Vermilyea, Steele County, was elected president of the Minnesota Association of County Feedlot Officers at the annual conference Oct. 19-21 in Mankato. In the other open seat, Megan Molitor, Morrison County, was elected secretary. Ben Crowell, Jackson County, and Tracy Janikula, Wright County, were re-elected vice president and treasurer, respectively. Topics addressed at the annual business meeting included the transition from eLINK to the Delta data system, a revised inspection form, future training, and county program funding. A panel including custom applicators reported that producers try to watch manure application rates and follow recommendations, for both economic and environmental reasons. The conference drew 69 of the nearly 80 registered members. The 2011 conference will be held the third week of October in the southeast, possibly Winona.

Dan Vermilyea receives 2010 Tina Rosenstein Award

Dan Vermilyea received the “Tina Rosenstein Award” at the 2010 MACFO

convention. The award honors a MACFO Member who has demonstrated leadership and achieved significant results in educating the general public about livestock operations, assisted livestock producers with recognizing the benefits of proper nutrient management, and fostered working relationships with livestock producers so that both the environmental permitting process and the requirements of Minnesota Rules Chapter 7020 are better understood and implemented. Dan started working in Mower County in 1996, and in both Mower and Steele counties in 1999. In 2003 he went full-time with Steele County as the county feedlot officer and weed inspector. Among his accomplishments, he helped develop the county work plan, provided leadership organizing CAWT trainings in southeast Minnesota, helped lead of six-county group conducting producer meetings, and is a member of the County Programs Team and Feedlot Management Team.



Dan Vermilyea

Issuance of 2011-16 NPDES feedlot general permits reaches halfway point

Since Aug. 1 the MPCA has received 1,012 applications for the 2011-2016 NPDES (National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System) feedlot general permit. Nearly 50 percent of those applications have been issued permits. Another 18 percent remain on public notice at this time. MPCA feedlot staff have reviewed 83 percent of the 1,012 applications. The new general permit becomes effective for five years starting Feb. 1, 2011. The existing 2006-2011 general permit will expire Feb. 1, 2011.

Katherine Richards is nutrient management specialist in six SE counties

Katherine Richards recently started work as a nutrient management specialist in Rice and five neighboring counties. A recent graduate in agronomy from SDSU, she will be working with landowners on the development of nutrient management plans, calibration of manure application equipment and assistance with manure sampling and testing. She will also work closely with the Natural Resources Conservation Service to develop nutrient management plans for federal cost-share contracts. The work area includes the counties of Wabasha, Goodhue, Rice, Steele, Dodge, and Freeborn. For more information go to: www.riceswcd.org, or call 507-332-5408.

USDA loan program includes open lot improvements

The USDA Farm Service Agency has launched a program that will provide credit to farm owners to implement land preservation techniques that will conserve natural resources. The conservation loan program will offer direct loans for up to \$300,000 and guaranteed loans for up to \$1,119,000. The funds can be used to install conservation structures, improve permanent pastures, or adapt other emerging or existing conservation practices, techniques, or technologies. This program can also be used to implement strategies to assist Minnesota livestock producers in meeting the open lot runoff reduction requirements. More information is available from the Farm Loan Manager at your local [Farm Service Agency](#) office. [Learn more.](#)

Livestock and Poultry Environmental Learning Center [newsletter](#)

- [LPELC October Newsletter \(PDF\)](#)

November [Webcast](#): Spill Prevention Control and Countermeasures (SPCC), Nov. 19, 2010 at 1:30 p.m. If your farm stores oil, fuel, or oil products, you should take note of the Spill Prevention, Control, and Countermeasures (SPCC) program. This rule applies to storages of a certain size and places some planning requirements on the farm. The webcast speakers will also discuss the proposed exemption for certain milk containers. Presenters will be: Carol Galloway, EPA Ag Center and Troy Swackhammer, EPA Office of Emergency Management.

Good Farm Neighbor – Robert and Pam Gierke, Villard

The Gierkes operate a family farm in Pope County with approximately 2,500 sows, 650 gilts, 4,000 nursery pigs and finish about 45,000 pigs per year. They have worked hard to properly manage their manure and maintain their building site. Their management of manure nutrients has already paid dividends by improving crop yields and contributing to higher organic matter in the soil. They have worked with Pope County SWCD and incorporated tree buffers around their barns to minimize odor and dust. The Good Farm Neighbor award honors farmers who show concern for their neighbors, their animals and the environment. It is presented monthly by the MDA in partnership with the Minnesota Farm Network, Minnesota Corn Growers Association and the Minnesota Soybean Promotion Council. Nomination forms can be emailed to margaret.hart@state.mn.us or mailed to Good Farm Neighbor Award, Minnesota Department of Agriculture, 625 N. Robert St., St. Paul, MN, 55155. A link with a downloadable nomination form is also on the MDA website at www.mda.state.mn.us.

County Profile: Renville – Tom Kalahar, Scott Refsland
With Scott Refsland in the office and Tom Kalahar in the field, Renville County packs an effective one-two punch in working with livestock and the environment. A county profile in January 2005 featured Scott, who is the county feedlot officer. Renville County lists 327 registered feedlots, and 47 NPDES sites, almost all swine. Tom, a 31-year veteran in the county SWCD office, recently concluded visits to the 280 non-NPDES sites. **“All in all it’s been a very positive experience,” Tom says. “It’s been a very positive partnership between the county and the SWCD. It makes a lot of sense to have someone with a technical background in the field, and who knows just about everyone in the county.”** Renville County has channeled about \$1.7 million over the past five years through EQIP and state cost-share for feedlot work, most at small beef and dairy farms. Project types include bark beds for milkhouse waste, irrigated buffers, curb and gutter, stacking slabs, and removing tile intakes. **“We’ve run into about every problem there is,” Tom says. “For the most part people are cooperative. We try to be fair and consistent.” With few exceptions, “there’s no lack of will, but there is a lack of cost-share money. Some farms have never been visited. Most admit to some runoff, and are willing to pay their share of repairs.” Last summer his office hosted meetings of the major state councils and commissions on the environment. He led a paddling tour on the Minnesota River July 21 with the Clean Water Council, Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources, and the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council. “We wanted to make the point that this is an area of heavily-used agricultural land, which has a significant impact on the river,” Tom says. “At the same time, we can show that things like buffer strips and wetland restoration can reduce water pollution from runoff.”** Tom lives in Olivia and is well-known in the area as an avid hunter and conservationist. Renville County feedlot program [Web site](#).



Tom Kalahar describes conservation practices during the July 21 tour.

In the News

[Activists say rules on water need to be stronger](#)

Des Moines Register, 11/17/10

[Use of robotics on Minnesota dairy farms on the rise](#)

MinnPost, 11/4/10

[Judge to farmer: Clean up or go to jail](#)

Star Tribune, 10/26/10

[State lags on fixing farm pollution](#)

Star Tribune, 10/24/10

[Farm, factory get top pollution fines](#)

Star Tribune, 10/24/10

Calendar

Nov. 16-18: [Forage Research conference](#), Kelly Inn, St. Cloud.

Nov. 30-Dec. 1: [Midwest Dairy Expo](#), St. Cloud Civic Center.

Nov. 30-Dec. 1: Nutrient Management Symposium, Mitchell, SD. Contact: John Lentz, (605) 996-1564.

Dec. 3-4: [Minnesota State Cattlemen's Association](#) convention, Jackpot Junction, Morton.

Dec. 4-5: Minnesota Lamb and Wool Producers Association convention, Jackpot Junction, Morton.

Dec. 5-7: Minnesota Association of [SWCD convention](#), Crown Plaza hotel, St. Paul.

Jan. 7-8: Minnesota Elk Breeders Association convention, Holiday Inn, Alexandria.

Jan. 19-20, 2011: [Pork Congress](#), Minneapolis Convention Center.

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- MACFO convention to elect new officers
- Dave Wall moving from feedlots to watershed team
- County staff to receive access, training for MPCA feedlot data system
- Feedlot staff busy reviewing and processing NPDES general permit applications
- Heavy rains bring basin overflow reports and prompt preventive steps
- Good Farm Neighbor – Steve and Carol Anderson, Foley
- County Profile: Olmsted – James Stannard III
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MACFO convention to elect new officers

After elections at the convention next week, at least two new officers will be joining the executive board of the Minnesota Association of County Feedlot Officers. Stepping down are Chairman, Becky Schlorf-von Holdt of Stearns County, and Secretary, Doug Bos of Rock County. Running for re-election are Vice-chair Ben Crowell of Jackson County and Treasurer Tracy Janikkula of Wright County. Dan Vermilyea, Steele County, reportedly is a candidate for chairman. The convention takes place Oct. 19-21 at the Mankato Country Inn and Suites. The convention program includes Dave Preisler of the Minnesota Pork Producers on the pork environmental quality assurance program, Carl Denkinger of the Board of Animal Health on carcass disposal, and a panel on manure management. Training materials for conference sessions are located on the MACFO [Web page](#) of the MPCA feedlot program Web site.



Doug Bos



Becky Schlorf-vonHoldt

Dave Wall moving from feedlots to watershed team

After 16 years working in the MPCA feedlot program as a hydrologist and most recently, east feedlot unit supervisor, Dave Wall has accepted a job in the technical assistance unit of the watershed program. Dave will be working on a study of nitrogen loading to Minnesota surface waters, examining nitrogen sources, pathways and existing conditions. The findings will be used to help establish **Minnesota's goals and strategies to address** the Gulf of Mexico hypoxia. Dave will remain working in the St. Paul MPCA office. "I



Dave Wall (r) chats with Ben Crowell, Jackson Co., at the '07 MACFO meeting

would like to express my gratitude for the privilege of working in the feedlot program over the years with so many wonderful people," **Dave says.**

County staff to receive access, training for MPCA feedlot data system

Greater efficiency in the feedlot program is expected to occur when county staff can work directly with the MPCA's feedlot program database. **In November and December, feedlot staff in delegated counties will receive training and electronic tools for using the agency's Delta database. It includes contact and facility information and screens for registration, inspections, permits, and enforcement.** Previously, county feedlot staff used the eLINK program of the Board of Soil and Water Conservation. Training dates and forms for county staff who will be participating are being posted on the feedlot program training [Web page](#).

Feedlot staff busy reviewing and processing NPDES general permit applications

A strong response to the Aug. 1 deadline for submitting NPDES general permit applications is keeping the MPCA feedlot staff busy reviewing applications, and following up with producers to ensure complete information. The new five-year NPDES general permit starts Feb. 1, 2011. Nearly 200 permits have been issued so far, and another 500 are on public notice, posted on the MPCA Web site [Public Notices](#) page. Applications include plans for odor and manure management, emergencies, animal carcass disposal, and operation and maintenance.

Heavy rains bring basin overflow reports and prompt preventive steps

Heavy rains across southern Minnesota in late September, on top of saturated soil in many areas, brought more challenges for harvest, manure storage, and land application. In the southeast, a number of feedlot operators called in reporting basin overflows, and efforts to pump and contain. For the harvest, combines appeared with tracks on the drivers to better handle soggy fields. In order to prevent manure basins from overflowing, or runoff from land application on saturated soils, the MPCA has prepared a list of steps to help deal with the dilemma and be better prepared. The fact sheet **"Managing manure and land application during adverse weather conditions"** is available at MPCA regional offices and is posted on the feedlot program Web page at: www.pca.state.mn.us/hot/feedlot-management.html. Should a basin overflow occur, operators must alert their county or state feedlot office, and must contact the state duty officer at 1-800-422-0798.

Livestock and Poultry Environmental Learning Center [newsletter](#)

The October edition of the National Livestock and Poultry Environmental Learning Center (LPELC) includes: November webcast on the Spill Prevention Control & Countermeasures (SPCC) rule; new LPELC web pages on anaerobic digestion; the role of agriculture in greenhouse gas emissions and capture, life cycle assessments for dairy, beef, and swine operations; the EPA's revised permit writers manual; nutrients in water (US Geological Survey report); injection and ammonia emissions; SARE farmer/rancher grants; and events from around the world of animal ag. The next webcast, scheduled for Oct. 15 at 1:30 pm, is the second of a two part series on the National Air Quality Site Assessment Tool (NAQSAT), and will include case studies on swine and poultry operations. Speakers are: Natalie Rector; Jerry May; and Darrin Karcher, Michigan State University. A second webcast later this month (Oct. 26; tentative time: 5 pm), will feature a synopsis live from the National Poultry Waste Management Symposium in North Carolina by four presenters and a panel discussion. Questions will be answered from the live audience as well as the webcast audience. Topics range from phosphorus to the Chesapeake Bay and economics/environmental aspects of using poultry litter on crops to air quality. Speakers are: Kelly Donham, University of Iowa; Daren Harmel, USDA ARS; Steve Auman, PCS Sales; James McNaughtan, AHPharma.

- [LPELC October Newsletter](#)

Good Farm Neighbor – Steve and Carol Anderson, Foley

Steve and Carol Anderson own and operate a Grade A dairy farm where they milk 70-75 Holstein cows and raise 70 replacement heifers. They raise corn, beans, and alfalfa and rent an additional 165-acre farm in Benton County. In 1990 they installed an MPCA/SWCD-designed manure pit. Since they live adjacent to the headwaters of the Elk River, the cow yard was bermed and drained to a filter strip. They have 160 acres of wooded land that follows the Elk River. Twenty years ago that was used as pasture, now it is dedicated to wildlife and left natural. They use conservation tillage practices and have been on the Round-Up Ready herbicide program since it began. The Good Farm Neighbor award honors farmers who show concern for their neighbors, their animals, and the environment. It is presented monthly by the MDA in partnership with the Minnesota Farm Network, Minnesota Corn Growers Association, and the Minnesota Soybean Promotion Council. Nomination forms can be emailed to margaret.hart@state.mn.us or mailed to Good Farm Neighbor Award, Minnesota Department of Agriculture, 625 N. Robert St., St. Paul, MN, 55155. A link with a downloadable nomination form is also on the MDA website at www.mda.state.mn.us.

County Profile: Olmsted – James Stannard III

Although Olmsted County is not a delegated county, it maintains a high level of feedlot program activity. As county feedlot technician, Jim Stannard works closely with the MPCA regional staff to keep the county inventory and state registration information current, helps producers through the state and local permitting process, which includes holding public meetings for feedlot permits with more than 300 AU, and assists the public and producers with information related to the livestock industry. Jim began working as the county feedlot technician in April 2000. The county-funded position was originally located in the county Extension office. Several years ago he moved to the Olmsted



James Stannard III - Olmsted County

SWCD office in the Farm Service Center. "It was a good move because it puts me closer to producers coming to do business with the FSA, NRCS, and the SWCD," Jim says. Olmsted County's feedlot program arose from a task force consisting of 30 members from government entities, private business, and the public. In December 1998, 14 recommendations were sent to the County Commissioners that included the need for an accurate census of animal numbers and facilities and the creation of a county feedlot technician position. The task force also recommended that the MPCA continue to keep the permitting authority for feedlots in the county.

Of Olmsted County's 18 townships, 14 townships do their own planning and **zoning**. "It keeps things interesting working with county and township staff and just tracking the different zoning requirements for feedlot setbacks, animal unit numbers, and criteria for their various ag zoning **districts**," Jim says. The Olmsted County livestock inventory maintains information on 733 sites, with a vast majority being under 300 animal units. Approximately 455 sites are required to register with the state. Livestock in the county runs the gamut, including a 13,000 head mink farm, llamas, emu, horses, and the usual sheep, swine, turkeys, dairy, and a large number of beef producers, as well as six NPDES sites. There are 104 sites participating in the open lot agreement.

Jim and his wife, Connie, live on a 160-acre farm near **Byron that they bought from Connie's** grandfather in 1993. The farm became a Century Farm in 1976, and Connie is the fifth generation to live there. They raise buffalo to sell the meat and are registered for 35 animal units. Jim is also the southeast Minnesota regional director for the Minnesota Buffalo Association and a member on the

Salem Township Planning and Zoning Board. Before becoming the Olmsted County feedlot technician, Jim worked five years in Dodge County doing water quality work, and prior to that he did mosquito control work in California for 24 years, eventually becoming manager for two mosquito control districts. If you have any questions or would like additional information you can call Jim at 507-280-2850.

In The News

[Illinois takes a hit over factory farms](#)

Chicago Tribune, 9/29/10

[MPCA Public Notices](#)

Feedlot NPDES permit application public notices.

Calendar

Oct. 21-24: [Minnesota Beef Expo](#), state fairgrounds.

Nov. 4: [Minnesota Agri-Growth Council](#) annual meeting, Minneapolis Convention Center.

Nov. 30-Dec. 1: [Midwest Dairy Expo](#), St. Cloud Civic Center.

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- Check MMPs now to prepare for changes due to wet field conditions in fall
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- USDA launches loan program for land preservation, conservation
- SE counties seek nutrient management specialist
- Margaret Mangan MDA environmental outreach coordinator
- 198 SWCD supervisor positions on ballot Nov. 2
- Good Farm Neighbor – Heintz Badger Valley Farm, Caledonia
- County Profile: Traverse – Bruce Johnson
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MACFO convention info available on new Web page

A [Web page](#) has been created on the MPCA feedlot program Web site for information about the Minnesota Association of County Feedlot Officers (MACFO). Current information includes the agenda and registration form for the annual convention, scheduled for Oct. 19-21 at the Mankato Country Inn and Suites. The convention program includes Dave Preisler of Minnesota Pork Producers on the pork environmental quality assurance program, Carl Denkinger of the Board of Animal Health on carcass disposal, and a panel on manure management.

BWSR feedlot grant sign-up extended to Sept. 30

The sign-up period for grants from BWSR for eligible open lot fixes continues until Sept. 30 or until all funds are appropriated. More than \$4 million was available for projects to protect and restore water quality by improving feedlots near impaired waters and replacing subsurface sewage treatment systems (SSTS) that are identified as an imminent health threat. Eligible feedlots must have less than 300 animal units, must be located in an impaired watershed or on riparian land, and address pollution problems. Feedlot projects also require a cash or in-kind cash value match of 25 percent. Grant information and forms are available at: www.bwsr.state.mn.us/grants/index.html. [Feedlot Signup](#) is a short tutorial video about the 2011 Feedlot Water Quality Management Program application process.

Check MMPs now to prepare for changes due to wet field conditions in fall

With a wet summer creating high soil moisture conditions in many fields, and who-knows-what will happen with the weather **this fall, now's a good time to check manure management plans and** prepare for changes due to wet weather. Assessing field conditions now can provide a head start for

making manure management plan changes, and notifying county or MPCA offices. For the past three years, wet fall weather has narrowed the window for manure application after the harvest. In order to prevent manure basins from overflowing, or runoff from land application on saturated soils, the MPCA has prepared a list of steps to help deal with the dilemma, and be better prepared. The fact sheet **"Managing manure and land application during adverse weather conditions"** is available at MPCA regional offices and is posted on the feedlot program Web page at: www.pca.state.mn.us/hot/feedlot-management.html.

Federal CAFO rules incorporated into feedlot general NPDES permit

Questions about the impact of federal CAFO rule changes in Minnesota are addressed in an updated factsheet, **"Feedlot NPDES general permit incorporates federal CAFO rules – no impact on most small, medium feedlots."** Minnesota made revisions to its feedlot general NPDES permit to incorporate all requirements at both the federal and state levels. The permit takes effect on Feb. 1, 2011, and expires five years later on Feb. 1, 2016. In Minnesota, all feedlots that meet the definition of a large CAFO under the federal rules, or have 1,000 or more animal units, must apply for an NPDES permit. No rule changes have been made recently that would affect small and medium-sized feedlot permitting requirements in Minnesota. The factsheet is located on the [feedlot program Web page](#) or available at MPCA regional offices.

USDA launches loan program for land preservation, conservation

The USDA Farm Service Agency has launched a program that will give credit to farm owners to implement land preservation techniques that will conserve natural resources. The conservation loan program will offer direct loans for up to \$300,000 and guaranteed loans for up to \$1,112,000. The funds can be used to install conservation structures, improve permanent pastures, or adapt other emerging or existing conservation practices, techniques, or technologies. This program can also be used to implement strategies to assist Minnesota livestock producers in meeting the open lot runoff reduction requirements. More information is available from the farm loan manager at your local [Farm Service Agency](#) office. [Learn more.](#)

SE counties seek nutrient management specialist

The Rice County SWCD announces a nutrient management specialist position to work with landowners on the development of nutrient management plans. The position also includes calibration of manure application equipment and assistance with manure sampling/testing. The work area includes the counties of Wabasha, Goodhue, Rice, Steele, Dodge, and Freeborn. This person will also work closely with the Natural Resources Conservation Service to develop nutrient management plans for federal cost-share contracts. This position is currently funded through state Clean Water Legacy grant funds and new funding is currently being applied for to continue the position for another two years. For more information go to: www.riceswcd.org/.

Margaret Mangan, MDA environmental outreach coordinator

Margaret Mangan recently joined the Minnesota Department of Agriculture as the environmental outreach **coordinator. She will be a liaison for the Clean Water Fund, acting as MDA's representative** on interagency communications teams and working directly with the public to share results and receive input on a variety of water quality issues. She is responsible for developing a coordinated communication effort on water quality and identifying opportunities to engage and inform the public. Margaret received her BA in Environmental Science from Colorado College in 2004 and her MS in Agronomy/Agroecology from the University of Minnesota in 2009. She has a diverse background in agriculture, having worked on farms in southern Minnesota and conducted ag. research statewide.

During her time at the University she worked closely with commodity groups in northern Minnesota and implemented long term research experiments on perennial bio-energy cropping systems. She has designed and implemented science-based educational programs, facilitated agricultural workshops, and has experience with stakeholder analysis. Margaret says **she is “excited about learning from and working with the agricultural community.”** margaret.e.mangan@state.mn.us.

198 SWCD supervisor positions on ballot Nov. 2

Of Minnesota's 450 Soil and Water Conservation District supervisor positions, 198 are up for election Nov. 2. More information about the candidates may be found on the web site of the Minnesota Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts (MASWCD) - www.maswcd.org. MASWCD solicited and compiled candidate profiles from those seeking the position of SWCD supervisor.

Livestock and Poultry Environmental Learning Center [newsletter](#)

- The September Webcast will highlight the growing popularity of incorporating manure in no-till and forage systems. The speakers will discuss some of the latest research on air emissions and equipment for both liquid and solid manure. Sept. 17, 2010, at 1:30 pm. [More...](#)
- **“Animal Mortality Disposal Options”** is a quick overview of the goals that should be achieved in proper mortality management as well as the options that may be available to a livestock or poultry producer for routine or catastrophic mortalities. [View video](#). The presenters include: Saqib Mukhtar, Texas AgriLife Extension; Jean Bonhotal, Cornell University; and Joshua Payne, Oklahoma State University. This video was developed mainly for teachers or extension staff to incorporate into lectures or programs about this topic.
- Solid Manure Injection Equipment – A machine that can inject dry poultry litter and composted cattle manure below the soil surface in pastures and no-till fields is on order from a research coalition across five Chesapeake Bay states: Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, Pennsylvania, and New York. There are currently no machines on the market that can do this. [More...](#)



Good Farm Neighbor – Heintz Badger Valley Farm, Caledonia

Doug Heintz and family operate a dairy with 150 Holsteins and 150 heifers, and farm 300 acres, all used for livestock feed. Farming in SE Minnesota “bluff country,” they contour strip the side hills with 30 rows of corn and then 75 foot strips of alfalfa every other row to control erosion. A trout stream goes through a former pasture which is in CRP to preserve water quality and prevent runoff. Some of the steepest crop land is enrolled in CRP to control erosion and enhance wildlife habitat. The Good Farm Neighbor award honors farmers who show concern for their neighbors, their animals and the environment. It is presented monthly by the MDA in partnership with the Minnesota Farm Network, Minnesota Corn Growers Association and the Minnesota Soybean Promotion Council. Nomination forms can be emailed to margaret.hart@state.mn.us or mailed to Good Farm Neighbor Award, Minnesota Department of Agriculture, 625 N. Robert St., St. Paul, MN, 55155. A link with a downloadable nomination form is also on the MDA website at www.mda.state.mn.us.

County Profile: Traverse – Bruce Johnson

Along with the general population in western Minnesota, the livestock industry in Traverse County is dwindling. Currently, there are 58 registered feedlots, the majority moderate to small size; 6 sites are listed as CAFOs. Located on a portion of the continental divide poses some interesting problems, says CFO Bruce Johnson. “Livestock owners in the southwestern portion of the county have been battling rising waters of wetland basins with no natural outlets. Several sites have seen water levels rise over 5

feet and have substantial runoff problems.” Bruce has been actively working with these producers to get funds to assist with solutions. Earlier this year Traverse County and Big Stone County hosted a **livestock producer’s meeting with** presentations from MDA, NRCS, and local county staff. The event, held in Graceville, was a success with nearly 30 producers in attendance. NRCS staff are working with one producer through the EQIP program to build a roof for a large beef cattle facility. Construction is scheduled to be completed late this fall. Bruce has been with the Traverse SWCD since 2004 as the district technician. After a shuffling of duties received from the county he took over the feedlot duties from Sara Gronfeld about two years ago. He has also operated a body shop since 1992. In his spare time he enjoys hunting and riding horse with family, wife Lynn, daughter Brandy, and son Dillan.



Bruce Johnson

In The News

[Iowa feedlots told: Clean up](#)

Omaha World-Herald, 9/9/10

[Minnesota farmer battles Gulf 'dead zone'](#)

CNN, 8/30/10

[Appeals court affirms district court ruling in registration challenge in Sibley County](#)

Leagle, 8/24/10

[MPCA Public Notices](#)

Feedlot NPDES permit application public notices.

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- Forms posted on Web to aid record-keeping
- Wadena reforestation project seeks donations
- Meeting Aug. 17 for public comments on water quality trading rule
- Joe Martin named MSCA director
- Livestock and Poultry Environmental Learning Center [newsletter](#)
- Good Farm Neighbor: – Luverne and Mary Jo Forbord, Starbuck
- County Profile: Faribault – Shane Johnson, Brandee Douglas
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- Calendar

Few days remain to apply for feedlot grants from BWSR

Applications must be in by Aug. 14 for grants from BWSR for eligible open lot fixes and SSTS projects. More than \$4 million is available for projects to protect and restore water quality by improving feedlots near impaired waters and replacing subsurface sewage treatment systems (SSTS) that are identified as an imminent health threat. Eligible feedlots must have less than 300 animal units, must be located in an impaired watershed or on riparian land, and address pollution problems. Feedlot projects also require a cash or in-kind cash value match of 25 percent. Grant information and forms are available at: www.bwsr.state.mn.us/grants/index.html

Applications arrive for 2011-2016 feedlot general NPDES permit

A flood of applications for the 2011-2016 NPDES general permit for livestock arrived in time to meet the Aug. 1 deadline. Applications should be submitted as soon as possible because failure to do so could result in an interruption of permit coverage, which is a violation of state rules and statutes. Permit application packets are available on the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency Web site at: www.pca.state.mn.us (navigate to [Water>Feedlots>Permit application forms](#)), or by calling your designated regional office. Applications include plans for odor and manure management, emergencies, animal carcass disposal, and operation and maintenance. Incomplete applications will be delayed until all forms are received. Each completed application will be open for a 30-day public comment period. Permit notices will be posted on the MPCA Web site [Public Notices](#) page.

Forms posted on Web to aid record-keeping

The MPCA feedlot program has developed several new record-keeping forms that will be available on **the program's Web pages**. The records are required for livestock operations with NPDES permits, and can be useful smaller sites as well: **Water Line Inspection Log Sheet (wq-f3-41)**, **Weekly Storage and**

Containment Structure Inspections Log Sheet (wq-f3-42), and Weekly Stormwater Management Structure Inspections Log Sheet (wq-f3-43) are located at:

<http://www.pca.state.mn.us/index.php/topics/feedlots/feedlot-permit-information-and-application-forms.html?menuid=&missing=0&redirect=1>

Wadena reforestation project seeks donations

Although farms and feedlots generally escaped the June tornadoes in Wadena County, trees didn't fare so well. Working from the SWCD office, CFO Molly Costin has been busy helping to restore the community forest. The Wadena Area Replant Project was created by citizens and businesses to raise \$100,000 to replant 10,000 trees in Wadena in 2011. A website has been created for the project: <http://www.treesforwadena.com>, where you can donate online through giveMN.org and the Initiative Foundation. Any monetary amount is welcome and we encourage everyone to spread the word in your circles of friends. You can also view progress of the project on the website, which will soon include a discussion board on donating trees and volunteering to help replant our community, and also follow the project on Facebook as Wadena Area Replant Project. – *Molly Costin, Wadena Soil & Water Conservation District, 218-631-3195 ext 3.*

Meeting Aug. 17 for public comments on water quality trading rule

The MPCA will hold an informal public meeting at 1 p.m., Aug. 17, to receive comments on the revised draft Water Quality Trading Rule. The meeting will be in conference rooms 2A and 2B of the MPCA St. Paul office. The purpose of the rule is to establish a statewide water quality trading rule that allows NPDES permit holders flexibility in achieving established mass effluent limits. The draft rule and draft statement of need and reasonableness (SONAR) are available on the MPCA Web page at <http://www.pca.state.mn.us/index.php/water/water-permits-and-rules/water-rulemaking/water-quality-trading-rule-development.html>. Requests for a printed copy of the proposed rule and SONAR can be made by calling 651-757-2090. Written comments can be sent to: Lisa McCormick, Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, 520 Lafayette Road North, St. Paul, MN 55055-4194, Telephone: 320-441-6969 or TTY 651-282-5332, e-mail: lisa.mccormick@state.mn.us.

Joe Martin named MSCA director

The Minnesota State Cattlemen's Association reports the appointment of Joe Martin as the new executive director starting Sept. 1. Since 2005, Martin has served as assistant commissioner of the Department of Agriculture. On July 28 MDA Commissioner Gene Hugoson announced that Martin will be leaving the department effective Aug. 31. According to an [MDA news release](#), since 2007, Martin has served as statewide bovine TB coordinator, coordinating the efforts of MDA, the Minnesota Board of Animal Health, the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, and other partners. He is forming Rural Strategies LLC, an agricultural and rural public affairs, management and consulting business. MSCA board member Dale Lueck said Martin was named to replace outgoing MSCA director Steve May, who is taking a regional ag marketing and sales position. Lueck says fall is a busy time of year for the MSCA staff, preparing for the Beef Expo Oct. 21-24, and the MSCA annual convention Dec. 3-4 at Jackpot Junction, Morton.



Livestock and Poultry Environmental Learning Center [newsletter](#)

[July newsletter](#): August Webcast: Finding Ways to Reduce Air Emissions Using NAQSAT - First in a two-part series about the National Air Quality Site Assessment Tool (NAQSAT). The NAQSAT tool uses eight parameters to determine which areas of an operation have the potential for reduced air emissions. The August installment will feature case studies on beef and dairy. October will highlight

swine and poultry. Speakers for August include Natalie Rector, Michigan State University; Crystal Powers, University of Nebraska-Lincoln; and Tamilee Nennich, Purdue University. August 20, 2010 at 2:30 pm (eastern); 1:30 pm (central); 12:30 pm (mountain); 11:30 am (pacific). [More...](#) | [Flyer](#)
New Video. The LPELC YouTube channel has added a presentation by Bud Malone, University of Delaware (retired) on "Composting Catastrophic Poultry Mortalities Using the Mix and Pile Method". [Video](#) | Check out the entire [archived webcast](#) | Related LPELC [web page](#).

Good Farm Neighbor – Luverne and Mary Jo Forbord, Starbuck

The Forbords have a small beef grazing operation of 140 animals in Pope County. As an organic operation, they are inspected annually to maintain that certification. With nine ponds, wetlands and lakes nearby, the cattle are restricted from lengthy grazing in any area that is environmentally sensitive. They have now converted 190 acres of cropland into perennial pasture using a diverse mix of cool and warm season grasses and legumes. Of their 480-acre Prairie Horizons farm, 350 are now certified organic and in 2008 passed inspection for organic certification in Japan and the European Union. The Good Farm Neighbor award honors farmers who show concern for their neighbors, their animals and the environment. It is presented monthly by the MDA in partnership with the Minnesota Farm Network, Minnesota Corn Growers Association and the Minnesota Soybean Promotion Council. Nomination forms can be emailed to margaret.hart@state.mn.us or mailed to Good Farm Neighbor Award, Minnesota Department of Agriculture, 625 N. Robert St., St. Paul, MN, 55155. A link with a downloadable nomination form is also on the MDA website at www.mda.state.mn.us.



Cattle grazing at Prairie Horizons Farm

County Profile: Faribault – Shane Johnson, Brandee Douglas

Shane Johnson took over the role of the Faribault County Feedlot Officer in 2010 after the death of Bruce Blakesley in October of 2009. Shane has been the program technician with the Faribault County SWCD since 1990 and works with the WCA program, cost-share programs, easement programs, the district tree program, the district rain gage program, and assists with district grant programs. He grew up and lives in Bricelyn, MN and is a volunteer firefighter there. He is also active in a local sportsman's club, snowmobile club, enjoys fishing and works



Faribault County feedlot staff (from left): Chad Viland, Shane Johnson, Brandee Douglas, and Linda Berndt.

part time for an area farmer in the spring and fall. The Faribault County SWCD has signed into an agreement with Faribault County to deliver county feedlot program administration. The SWCD utilizes a teamwork approach in implementing the feedlot program with Brandee Douglas, assistant program administrator, maintaining the feedlot inventory, GIS database, and completing yearly reporting requirements. Both Brandee and Linda Berndt, administrative assistant, provide additional support to the program by completing forms, permits, educational outreach and correspondence. Chad Viland,

water resource technician, also assists with inspections and registration. The MPCA database identifies 400 active feedlots in Faribault County with swine being the dominant animal type. Currently, staff at the SWCD is in the process of completing the annual feedlot inspections/registrations. To date, the inspections have been going very well with no major violations. Faribault County is also working with some feedlot operators on expansion projects and installing an earthen manure storage basin. [Faribault County SWCD](#).

In The News

[Nohl's Farm featured on Minnesota cattlemen's tour](#)

AgriNews, 7/29/10

[MPCA rules county is permitting authority for Ingvalson project](#)

Caledonia Argus

Renville County commissioners extend contract until year's end for feedlot rules

AgWeek, 7/28/10

Renville County will continue to contract with its SWCD office for feedlot enforcement services for the remaining six months of the year. The County Board agreed to a six-month extension to a contract that had expired June 30. [More](#) (registration, fee may apply).

[Keeping them cool](#)

Marshall Independent, 7/14/10

[MPCA Public Notices](#)

Feedlot NPDES permit application public notices.

Calendar

Oct. 21-24: [Minnesota Beef Expo](#), state fairgrounds.

Nov. 30-Dec. 1: [Midwest Dairy Expo](#), St. Cloud Civic Center.

Dec. 3-4: [Minnesota State Cattlemen's Association](#) convention, Jackpot Junction, Morton.

Dec. 5-7: Minnesota Association of [SWCD convention](#), Crown Plaza hotel, St. Paul.

Jan. 19-20, 2011: [Pork Congress](#), Minneapolis Convention Center.

Jan. 17-18, 2011: MN Ag Expo, Jackpot Junction, Morton.

March 15-17, 2011: [Midwest Poultry Federation](#) convention, St. Paul RiverCentre.

The purpose of this electronic newsletter is to provide another communication tool for the MPCA and county feedlot officers. It will attempt to provide accurate, objective, concise, and timely information about the feedlot program, but not necessarily reflect official agency policy.

Please forward to anyone who might be interested in this information. If you know of anyone who would like to be on this distribution list, please send us their e-mail address. If you have any questions, or would like to suggest a newsletter topic, please contact Forrest Peterson, MPCA Willmar office, 320-441-6972, forrest.peterson@state.mn.us. Thanks.



MPCA Feedlot Program Update



Working with agriculture on efficient and effective solutions for environmental stewardship

July 13, 2010

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Sooner the better to apply for feedlot grants from BWSR

The sooner the better for any applications for grants recently announced by BWSR for eligible open lot fixes and SSTS projects. More than \$4 million is available for projects to protect and restore water quality by improving feedlots near impaired waters and replacing subsurface sewage treatment systems (SSTS) that are identified as an imminent health threat. Applications must be in by Aug. 14. Eligible feedlots must have less than 300 animal units, must be located in an impaired watershed or on riparian land, and address pollution problems. Feedlot projects also require a cash or in-kind cash value match of 25 percent. Grant information and forms are available at: www.bwsr.state.mn.us/grants/index.html

Applications due Aug. 1 for 2011-2016 feedlot general NPDES permit

Operators of nearly 1,200 large livestock farms with general operating permits are being reminded about the Aug. 1 application deadline for a new, five-year general operating permit for 2011-2016. Permit application packets are available on the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency Web site at: www.pca.state.mn.us (navigate to [Water>Feedlots>Permit application forms](#)), or by calling your designated regional office. Applications include plans for odor and manure management, emergencies, animal carcass disposal, and operation and maintenance. Incomplete applications will be delayed until all forms are received. Each completed application will be open for



a 30-day public comment period. Permit notices will be posted on the MPCA Web site [Public Notices](#) page.

July 2010 livestock 'NPDES News' being mailed, e-mailed

The July 2010 issue of the semi-annual "NPDES News" features the 2011-2016 livestock NPDES general permit. It has been e-mailed to 245 contacts at large feedlots with NPDES permits, and sent by regular mail to more than 500. Where feasible, the MPCA is moving to electronic distribution of documents to save on costs. A copy of the newsletter is attached; current and past issues are available on the [Publications page](#) of the feedlot program Web site.

Schroeder dairy featured in MPCA 'water stories' video

The Nicollet County dairy farm of John and Jason Schroeder joins the growing list of "water stories" videos located on the MPCA's Web site. Through the Open Lot Agreement in the 7020 feedlot rule, the Schroeders received cost-share to help finance about \$91,000 in improvements. The work included a waste storage basin, stormwater control structures, and other open lot improvements. John and Jason represent the fifth and sixth generations on the family farm, where they milk 60 registered Holsteins, raise breeding bulls, and farm 325 acres just outside of Courtland, north of Highway 14 between New Ulm and Mankato. Financial assistance came from a U.S. Natural



John Schroeder, right, his son, Jason, and Deana Biehn, Nicollet County feedlot officer, check the inspection access to a tile around the dairy's manure storage basin.

Resources Conservation Service grant covering 50 percent of the cost, and a low-interest state loan. To find the video, click on [Minnesota Water Stories](#).

June tornados left damaged, destroyed barns and livestock

The onslaught of tornadoes June 17 in Wadena and Freeborn counties caused considerable damage to barns and livestock in the latter; fortunately, no livestock were harmed Wadena County, according to CFO Molly Costin. In Freeborn, CFO Colin Wittmer compiled photos and statics of damage: nearly 200 hogs lost, about 40 steers, and more than two dozen barns damaged or destroyed (Photo: David Hanson farm). Most of the carcasses were rendered; one site



planned to use composting. Information about carcass disposal is found on the Board of Animal Health Web site: www.bah.state.mn.us/bah/carcass-disposal/. The Iowa State University Agricultural and Biosystems Engineering [Web site](#) provides instructions for composting of large livestock. Less than two weeks later, tornados touched down in the Blue Earth County area. CFO Sara Isebrand

reported, "We had one hog barn where the metal roof was blown off and spread out in the field about ½ mile, which was easily replaced. We also had one NPDES site where all three hog barns suffered wind and tornado damage to the point that the barns were not structurally safe. They hauled three semi loads to Tyson and found temporary barns for the other hogs. They demolished all the barns and are currently looking to rebuild soon."

New fact sheet outlines feed storage area requirements

The MPCA has prepared a new fact sheet that outlines permit requirements and operational guidance for feed storage areas. For sites with NPDES permits, a permit or permit modification is required when a feed storage area is constructed or expanded by adding additional area to the existing footprint of the feed storage area. Although non-NPDES sites generally do not need a permit, they still must operate avoiding contaminated discharge. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has indicated that containment of runoff generated by precipitation on feedstocks, or remnants of feedstocks, is necessary for large concentrated animal feeding operations (CAFO) to comply with the effluent limitations contained within the federal rule. The fact sheet is available by contacting your MPCA regional office, county feedlot office (document number wq-f8-21), or on the Web at www.pca.state.mn.us, and click on Quick Links, and then Feedlots.

Schiefelbein reappointed to MPCA citizens' board

Governor Tim Pawlenty recently appointed Eric Gustafson and Mary Riley, and reappointed Donald K. Schiefelbein to the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency Citizens' Board. Schiefelbein, of Kimball, is a partner and chief financial officer of Schiefelbein Farms, a diversified farming operation in Meeker County. He is president-elect of the Minnesota State Cattlemen's Association, and co-chair of the Minnesota Beef Profitability Task Force. [Story in The Farmer](#)



FSA county committee nominations June 15 - August 2

From June 15 through Aug. 2, 2010, agricultural producers may nominate themselves or others to serve on local USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) County Committees. Nomination forms are available online at www.fsa.usda.gov/elections or at local USDA service centers. The election will take place November 5 through December 6 and newly elected FSA County Committee members will take office January 1, 2011. Participation in the election is important to all producers large or small, beginning or well-established. Committee members help ensure that FSA programs serve the needs of local producers. They provide critical input on FSA commodity price support loans and payments, conservation programs, payment eligibility, emergency programs and more. An [FSA County Committee Election](#) fact sheet provides complete information about the 2010 election process. – *MDA Conservation Updates*

Livestock and Poultry Environmental Learning Center [newsletter](#)

August Webcast: Finding Ways to Reduce Air Emissions Using NAQSAT

First in a two-part series about the National Air Quality Site Assessment Tool (NAQSAT). The NAQSAT tool uses eight parameters to determine which areas of an operation have the potential for reduced air emissions. The August installment will

feature case studies on beef and dairy. October will highlight swine and poultry. Speakers for August include Natalie Rector, Michigan State University; Crystal Powers, University of Nebraska-Lincoln; and Tamilee Nennich, Purdue University. August 20, 2010 at 2:30 pm (eastern); 1:30 pm (central); 12:30 pm (mountain); 11:30 am (pacific). [More...](#) | [Flyer](#)



Two Studies Show That Manure “Stacks Up”, Economically Speaking

Chicken litter is much more valuable as a fertilizer than previously thought, according to an Agricultural Research Service (ARS) study showing its newfound advantages over conventional fertilizers. Some cotton farmers in the Mississippi area are switching to chicken litter and away from standard inorganic, synthetic fertilizers. Many other farmers are interested in the possible economic benefits of using chicken litter, but are reluctant to switch without the numbers to back up their decision. [More...](#)

A separate study showed no significant differences in corn yield between organic and chemical sources of nutrients, but a Texas AgriLife Research economist said manure generates higher economic returns than anhydrous ammonia. The long-term experiment involved the use of pig and beef manure on irrigated corn fields. The testing was conducted in part due to a rapid growth of animal population and density in the Oklahoma Panhandle, as well as the northern part of the Texas Panhandle. [More...](#)

Good Farm Neighbor – Don & Debra/Kevin & Stacy Thoeny - Ogilvie

The Thoenys operate a 200-cow dairy and raise their own replacement heifers. They farm 1,100 acres between the two families, with 210 acres no till. Corn, soybeans, wheat and alfalfa are grown both for livestock feed and cash crop. Cows are housed in a compost bedded-pack barn, which helps to eliminate odor and prevent leaching of nutrients from the manure. Liquid manure is directly injected into the soil to minimize odor and runoff. They work with a consultant to develop a nutrient management program. Dikes were installed in one of the fields to prevent further erosion of the field. The Good Farm Neighbor award honors farmers who show concern for their neighbors, their animals and the environment. It is presented monthly by the MDA in partnership with the Minnesota Farm Network, Minnesota Corn Growers Association and the Minnesota Soybean Promotion Council. Nomination forms can be emailed to margaret.hart@state.mn.us or mailed to Good Farm Neighbor Award, Minnesota Department of Agriculture, 625 N. Robert St., St. Paul, MN, 55155. A link with a downloadable nomination form is also on the MDA website at www.mda.state.mn.us.

County Profile: Brown – Desiree Hohenstein, Laine Sletta

Feedlot operators in Brown County are finding something new in the mail these days. The first edition of “The Applicator,” mailed to 425 farms, carries articles about construction permits, manure record-keeping, and the recently-announced BWSR grants. It was created by CFO technician and assistant zoning administrator, Desiree Hohenstein. The title of the newsletter indicates the importance that the county assigns to manure management and land application. Earlier, the county had been working on an inventory of all land-applied acres. The official CFO designation goes to Laine Sletta, who was named zoning administrator in 2006, in charge of 11 departments. Laine has been with the county since 1987. The MPCA database lists 507 feedlots in Brown County. The list includes 40 CAFOs, most swine, led by Christensen Farms and Schwartz Farms. The construction season has been booming with new barns going up, says Desiree, and Clean Water funds are helping with some beef and dairy projects, including bark bed treatment and irrigation for milk house waste. Desiree started with the county 2-1/2 years ago assigned to wetlands, water plan, and recycling. A year ago she changed positions and added feedlot technician to part of her job description, and began working on education, technical assistance, and site visits. “We’re seeing producers come in looking for assistance, and we work well with SWCD and NRCS,” Desiree says. A native of the San Francisco bay area, Desiree (Snyder) met her future husband, Ed (Hohenstein), while attending Bemidji State where she majored in aquatic biology, and also acquired a good German name fitting for the New Ulm area. Prior to Brown County, she was a watershed



Desiree Hohenstein

coordinator in Iowa, and worked as a consultant doing wetland delineations and GIS. The Hohensteins live near Le Sueur in Sibley County. [Brown County Planning and Zoning](#)

In The News

[Comments sought on environmental assessment for proposed feedlot expansion near Richmond](#)

MPCA news release, 7/12/10

[EPA Orders Illinois Livestock Operation to Pay \\$40,000 Penalty for Unauthorized Waste Discharges](#)

EPA news release, 7/9/10

[Feedlot violations cost Crow Wing Feeders \\$15,000](#)

MPCA news release, 7/7/10

[Commentary - Farmers protect water quality](#)

Ag Week, 6/25/10

[MPCA Public Notices](#)

Feedlot NPDES permits and public notice end dates:

Triple J Land and Livestock, Fairmont, July 16

Crow Wing Feeders-VanHeel Feedlot, July 19

Sparboe Farms, Litchfield, July 19

Whitehead Finishers, Dunnell, July 26

Woodland Turkeys, Swanville, July 29

MJCC, Butterfield, July 31

Calendar

July 12-13: Summer Beef Tour, Morris, [Minnesota State Cattlemen's Association](#).

Aug. 3-5: [Farm Fest](#), Gilfillan Farm, Redwood County

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