Spread the Wealth

During the last fiscal year, poultry and livestock farmers transported a record 249,421 tons of manure away from fields with high soil phosphorus levels using $1.02 million in state cost-share grants. Delmarva poultry companies provided an additional $453,876 in matching funds to transport poultry litter. This is the fifth consecutive year of growth for the Manure Transport grant program.

In recent years, the program has introduced a 48-hour Fast Track grant approval program to move poultry litter out of nutrient sensitive areas and simplified its grants to move dairy and other non-poultry manures.

Farmers interested in using manure as a crop fertilizer and soil conditioner should check out the department’s grants to haul manure at mda.maryland.gov/manure or visit their local soil conservation district for more information. Applications for Fast Track grants to move poultry litter are available on the web page.

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WINTER MANAGEMENT RULES

Winter Nutrient Application Restrictions Begin December 16

The following nutrient application restrictions are in effect through February 28:

- Liquid manure generated on the farm must be stored in structures.
- Applying chemical fertilizers is prohibited with some exceptions for certain crops. Contact your regional nutrient management specialist or University of Maryland Extension advisor for guidance.
- Organic sources may be applied to fields beginning March 1 as long as fields are not saturated, snow covered or hard-frozen.
- Use of potash and liming materials is not restricted.
- Manure deposited directly by livestock is not restricted.
- Smaller dairy operations with less than 50,000 lbs. of live animal weight are exempted from winter manure spreading restrictions until March 1, 2020.
- For more information, go to the Maryland Nutrient Management Manual at: mda.maryland.gov/resource_conservation/Pages/nm_manual.aspx

Emergency Winter Spreading

To help protect against nutrient losses to waterways, spreading manure in winter is prohibited in Maryland except when emergency exemptions have been issued by the department beforehand. The department is authorized to work with farmers to prevent overflows from storage structures in winter. In these instances, farmers must contact the Nutrient Management Program for authorization before any spreading takes place. The department will work with farmers to prevent overflows from storage structures and minimize impacts to water quality. Contact the Nutrient Management Program at 410-841-5959 if you have storage concerns.

Stockpile Guidelines

Temporary field stockpiling of poultry litter and other stackable organic nutrient sources with 60 percent or less moisture content is allowed only when all other storage options are unavailable. Here are the rules:

- Spread the stockpiled manure on fields the first spring following creation of the stockpile and no earlier than March 1, following the farm’s nutrient management plan.
- Stack the stockpile at least 6 feet high with a peak to allow it to shed rainfall.
- Make certain that the stockpile area is:
  - At least 100 feet from any surface water and irrigation or treatment ditches, or 35 feet away if a vegetative buffer is in place
  - At least 150 feet from wells, springs, and wetlands
  - At least 300 feet from a well that is down gradient from the stockpile
  - At least 200 feet from any residence outside the operator’s property
  - Outside flood-prone areas and areas prone to ponding
  - No farther than 150 feet from the top of a 3 percent slope that has no diversion installed
- After removing the stockpile, thoroughly scrape or clean the ground and restore the area to its original condition.
- Reseed the area with grass or a crop.
PMT Update

Most farmers in the high risk tier group for phosphorus loss had a smooth transition to the Phosphorus Management Tool (PMT) in 2018. The group includes 96 farmers managing 10,894 acres of land identified as having a high risk for phosphorus runoff based on soil test results. A second tier group of farmers with fields at medium risk for phosphorus runoff will begin using the PMT in 2019. The department is ready to help these farmers with cost-share to move manure and build manure storage structures. Here is the PMT phase in schedule for all groups:

2018: High risk group transition underway (average soil phosphorus Fertility Index Value greater than 450)
2019: Medium risk group begins transition (average soil phosphorus Fertility Index Value of 300-450)
2020: Low risk group begins transition (average soil phosphorus Fertility Index Value of 150-299)
2022: PMT is fully implemented by all tier groups

New Setback Calculator

A new interactive nutrient management setback calculator is available on the website to help consultants and certified farmers identify required setback information when preparing nutrient management plans. To access the tool, go to mda.maryland.gov. Click on "Nutrient Management" in Quick Links, then click on "Agricultural Nutrient Management" and scroll down the right column to the first link under Consultants.

- Double click the link. Due to the large amount of data being accessed, it may take a few moments to load.
- Click on the third icon on the top left to access the layer list.
- Expand the layers by clicking the arrow next to the box labeled Nutrient Management Setback Buffers.
- Check or uncheck the default layers that you want.
- Click on the operational layer to see the legend.
- Type in the address and click the search button to see the results.

New Faces

Marcus Williams is the new urban nutrient management specialist serving Central and Western Maryland. Marcus received his M.S. in Food Safety and Biosecurity from Virginia Tech in 2017 and his B.S. in plant and soil science from Virginia State University in 2009. He has worked as a volunteer green ranger for AmeriCorps in Knoxville, Tennessee and as a horticulture teacher in Baltimore. More recently, he worked for Virginia Cooperative Extension as an Agricultural and Natural Resource Agent. Prior to joining the Department, he worked in Maryland’s emerging cannabis industry. Contact Marcus at 410-841-5973 or marcusj.williams@maryland.gov.

Whitney Harrison joins the department as a nutrient management specialist. She will be reviewing nutrient management plans for farms located throughout the state to ensure that they comply with Maryland’s regulations and are protecting water quality. Whitney is a graduate of the University of Maryland, Baltimore County and is currently pursuing her Master’s Degree. She brings 10 years of state government experience in compliance, planning and resource conservation. Contact Whitney at 410-841-5949 or whitney.harrison2@maryland.gov.
Urban Update

Submit Annual Fertilizer Application Reports by March 1
Annual Fertilizer Application Reports outlining total nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium applied to turf and compiled by county are due to the department by March 1. The forms will be mailed to all license holders in January. Additional forms will be posted to the website at: mda.maryland.gov/fertilizer

Continuing Education Requirements
Professional Fertilizer Applicators are required to complete two hours of continuing education each year as a condition for renewing their certifications. Register for classes at: mda.maryland.gov/fertilizer

Revised Regulations for Organic Fertilizer Products
Following legislative changes made to the Lawn Fertilizer Law during the 2018 session of the Maryland General Assembly, the program revised its regulations for organic fertilizer products to make them consistent with those for synthetic products. As a result, professional fertilizer applicators now have more choices in the products they can use. The revised regulations took effect October 1, 2018. The Professional Lawn Care Manual that is posted on the website has been updated to reflect these changes:

- Lawn care professionals may now apply up to 0.5 pound of soluble or insoluble nitrogen per 1,000 sq. ft. from November 15 through December 1. Previously, only soluble nitrogen was allowed during this time period.
- Organic fertilizer products no longer need to be “low phosphate.” The change allows these products to be applied according to University of Maryland recommendations and soil test results.

Contact Information
For questions about certification, re-certification, continuing education credits, or other concerns, please contact the urban nutrient management specialist serving your county:

- Anne Arundel, Calvert, Caroline, Cecil, Charles, Dorchester, Howard, Kent, Prince George’s, Queen Anne’s, St. Mary’s, Somerset, Talbot, Wicomico, and Worcester—Judy McGowan: 410-841-5955, judy.mcgowan@maryland.gov
- Allegany, Baltimore, Baltimore City, Carroll, Frederick, Garrett, Harford, Montgomery, and Washington—Marcus Williams: 410-841-5973, marcusj.williams@maryland.gov

“Secretary’s Message” continued from page 1

nutrient application technology, manure injection, split nitrogen applications, and the use of nitrogen stabilizers to protect against nutrient losses.

A list of upcoming training classes can be found on page 5 of this newsletter.

In this edition of the newsletter you can also brush up on winter spreading restrictions, rules for temporary stockpiles, and our new online setback calculator tool. Our urban partners can read up on our revised regulations regarding the use of organic fertilizer. Now is a good time for farmers and lawn care professionals to get your paperwork in order so that you can file your annual fertilizer reports with the department by March 1.

With best wishes for a happy holiday season and a healthy and prosperous new year,

Joe Bartenfelder
Maryland Agriculture Secretary
Agricultural Nutrient Management Program

Update Your Nutrient Management Plan Workshops
University of Maryland Extension Nutrient Management specialists will be available to help farm operators update their nutrient management plans for the upcoming cropping season.

Dates | January, February, and April 2019
Locations | Various
Who Should Attend | Farmers who are certified to prepare and update nutrient management plans for their own operations.
How to Register | Contact Paul Shipley, University of Maryland Extension, 301-405-2563 or prs@umd.edu

Nutrient Applicator Voucher Training and Recertification
Free voucher training and renewal courses are offered for farm operators who apply nutrients to 10 or more acres of cropland. The two-hour course is required once every three years. Classes are offered throughout fall and winter in most counties. (Certified farmers are not required to attend voucher training.) For the complete training schedule visit mda.maryland.gov and type “Nutrient Management Voucher Training” in the search box.

Farmer Training and Certification Workshops

Dates / Locations | January 22 and February 5 — Queen Anne’s County
January 28 and February 11 — Frederick County
February 6, 13, 20 and 27 and March 6 — Howard County
March 7, 8, 12, 14, 12, 21 and 28 — Baltimore City

Who Should Attend | Farmers who want to become certified to write nutrient management plans for their own operations. The Queen Anne’s, Frederick, and Howard county programs are for producers with cropland and pastures who use commercial fertilizer and/or manure. The Baltimore City program is for intensive small-scale food production operations. All workshops include about 11 hours of classroom lecture and practice in writing plans.

How to Register | Visit mda.maryland.gov and type “Nutrient Management Training” in the search box.

Learn and Earn Continuing Education Credits On-Line
Ongoing | Many educational programs qualify for Maryland Nutrient Management continuing education credits. Even if you can’t attend a webinar session “live,” you might be able to earn continuing education credits at a later date.

How to Register | Visit mda.maryland.gov and type “Nutrient Management Webinars” in the search box.

Turfgrass Nutrient Management Program

Professional Fertilizer Applicator Certification Training/Exam

Dates | New exam dates are being planned and will be posted on the website as soon as they are finalized.
Locations | Statewide
Who Should Attend | Individuals who want to become certified to apply fertilizer to lawns that they manage.

Professional Fertilizer Applicator Continuing Education Classes

Dates / Locations | December 17, 2018 — Boonsboro, MD
January 14, 2019 — Forest Hill, MD
January 15, 2019 — Salisbury, MD
January 16, March 19 and May 9, 2019 — Annapolis, MD
February 15 and April 30, 2019 — Derwood, MD
February 19, 2019 — Leonardtown, MD

Who Should Attend | Certified professional fertilizer applicators seeking to renew their certifications.
How to Register | Visit mda.maryland.gov/fertilizer. Check back often for new offerings.

Meet the New Extension Coordinator

Dr. David E. Ruppert has joined the staff of the University of Maryland Extension as an assistant clinical professor and coordinator for the Agricultural Nutrient Management Program, a position held for many years by Dr. Trish Steinhilber.

Dr. Ruppert is no stranger to soil science or the University. Born inside the Washington, D.C. beltway, he received his Ph.D in Soil Science from the University of Maryland in 2012. Dr. Ruppert doesn’t mind getting his hands dirty and proudly points out that his initials spell “DERt.” As part of his research, he spent many happy hours in the agricultural drainage ditches of a broiler farm in Somerset County, where he studied the soil’s ability to retain and release phosphorus. Dr. Ruppert received his M.S. in physics from Dartmouth College and his B.S. in Physics from the University of Dallas.

For the past seven years, he has worked for the Texas A&M System conducting soils research and teaching undergraduate and graduate level courses in soil science. Prior to that, he served as an adjunct professor at the Johns Hopkins University. He says that he is “thrilled” to be back in his home state of Maryland and plans to focus on making sure that Extension nutrient management advisors are well trained and supported. He looks forward to working with the Department to help producers improve their management of nutrients while making soil health and clean water a priority.
What's Inside:

- Grants to Move Manure
- Winter Restrictions in Effect
- Annual Implementation Reports Due March 1
- New Urban Rules for Organic Fertilizer Products
- New Faces