Barn Talk: The Brown and White of Winter Application

Can farmers land apply manure in the winter season? Yes. However, a new setback comes into play:

“The 300 Foot Setback Rule”

All producers must adhere to the 300’ setback from sensitive features when applying manure onto snow covered or frozen ground.

What are “sensitive features”? 
- Streams/riders
- Intermittent streams /waterways which flow after storms or when the snow melts
- The hitch of a ditch: Road ditches flowing to other sensitive features or surface waters become intermittent waterways
- Lakes - defined by DNR (includes some larger wetlands)
- Protected wetlands
- Drainage ditches
- Open tile intakes

To the non-farmer who witnesses land application of manure, keep the following in mind:
- Manure is organic. The soil needs organic material to stay healthy and viable.
- Pen pack manure can provide material that stabilizes sediment and holds moisture in the soil.
- The smell from manure goes away. It is not harmful to your health.
- If the manure is being injected into the ground, the ground is not frozen.
- Not all application of manure needs to wait until the soil is 50 degrees. It’s recommended when applying manure to coarse soils to wait until soil (at 6 inches depth) drops below 50 degrees. Soil types ending with the descriptor “loam” are not coarse soils.
- Farmers do care about water quality. The majority of manure application is done correctly.

Thank you to our sponsors for this year’s Enviro-Fest:
Central MN Credit Union, City of Clarissa, City of Long Prairie, Clarissa Ballroom, Coborn’s, Dale and Marie Katterhagen, Kenny Pesta, Todd-Wadena Electrical Co-op, Norman Krause, Prairie Lakes, Pro Ag, SA Design & GraphiX, Subway, Todd Soil and Water Conservation District, American Foods Group, MN Corn Growers & Todd SWCD

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PRECIPTATION AMOUNTS (INCHES)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2014 MONTHLY AVERAGE</th>
<th>10 YEAR AVE.</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>6.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July</td>
<td>3.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August</td>
<td>4.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September</td>
<td>2.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October</td>
<td>0.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November</td>
<td>1.33</td>
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FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

319 Cost Share: These funds are specifically targeted for the Long Prairie River Watershed due to the impaired status of the Long Prairie River. Eligible projects for cost share include, but aren’t limited to: Ag waste pond abandonment, grass buffers, exclusion fencing projects, bank stabilization and shoreland erosion control projects.

State Cost Share: These funds can be used for, but not limited to, projects such as diversions, terraces, sediment basins, filter strips, Ag waste ponds, and shoreland erosion control projects. All landowners and occupiers throughout Todd County are eligible to apply for these funds.

3% Low-Interest Loans (AgBMP): Project examples include, but aren’t limited to: Replacing existing individual septic systems, Ag waste systems, erosion control projects, conservation tillage equipment and relocation of wells.

As with all AgBMP loans, there must be an existing problem and the project must have a direct impact on improving or protecting water quality. The eligibility is approved by the SWCD Board and the loan application is approved by the lending institute. No work can start until your application has been approved. Contact Todd SWCD for an AgBMP loan application.

TODD SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
2015 TREE ORDER FORM

Name: ____________________________
Address: ___________________________
City/State/Zip: _______________________
Phone: (______) _________-__________
Email: ____________________________

All orders must be pre-paid. Make checks payable to: Todd Soil & Water
Return to 215 1st Ave. South, Suite 104, Long Prairie, MN 56347
Phone: (320)732-2644
Email: sarah.katterhagen@co.todd.mn.us

Need help? Todd SWCD can work with you to design field windbreak or to help you fix cropland gullies. Got those things covered, but have complicated erosion issues? We can help with that too, but keep in mind these fixes can take up to two years to complete, because the site may need to be surveyed and the plans designed by an engineer. Either way, just ask and we’ll help you get there.
The 2014 growing season provided many challenges for local farmers and offered growers an opportunity to evaluate how their nitrogen management program performed in such adverse conditions. Throughout a five county area we were able to enroll 65 fields into our guided stalk sampling program. We did have a handful of replicated strip trials that we were planning on implementing; however, a late spring didn’t allow growers the necessary time to properly complete trial installations and so we regretfully had to abandon them for 2014.

The staff members at Todd County did a great job of reaching out to local producers and were able to secure fifteen fields for enrollment. Greg and Sarah also did an excellent job of obtaining field management information from the producers. Another highlight was being able to bring Shannon and Deja to a producer’s field (who was coincidentally a Todd SWCD board member) and show them first-hand how the guided stalk collection process is completed.

We hope to have a full time staff member in a nutrient management specialist capacity prior to next growing season and the need for the position was quite evident during the 2014 season. Without having someone fully dedicated to the program we saw some areas for improvement. In Todd County we lost three fields that were chopped for silage prior to sampling, and one field that was enrolled into the program but was later planted to soybeans. We are confident that a full time staff person will be able to alleviate such problems and provide more individual assistance to landowners.

All of the samples have been collected and have been shipped to the lab for testing. Our job now is to track down missing management data and compile reports for our winter meeting. Our winter meeting will allow growers to obtain the results and imagery from their fields as well as learn from the group about what worked and didn’t work on other fields.

The Todd, Wadena, and Hubbard Irrigation Scheduler Program had yet another successful year in 2014. In only its second year of existence, the program was able to increase the number of fields from 20 fields in 2013, to 36 fields in 2014. The program would have been able to reach 40 fields this year but due to the wet spring and early summer, four fields weren’t able to get planted. Below is a summary for each county.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Acres</th>
<th>Total Fields</th>
<th>Todd</th>
<th>Wadena</th>
<th>Hubbard</th>
<th>Becker</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2,120</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
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**AWARD WINNERS**

**OUTSTANDING CONSERVATIONIST - ROGER AND BONNIE DUKOWITZ**

The Dukowitz’s have farmed outside of Browerville since 1975 on land initially farmed by Roger’s grandfather in 1917 implementing practices such as rotational grazing, tree plantings, adaptive nitrogen management, and reduced tillage. In addition, Roger is active on several boards and committees related to farming, irrigation, 4H, the County Fair, and Breakfast-on-the-Farm. Roger is well known for taking a stand on issues that may impact farming and has spoken before the Planning Commission and Board of Commissioners on many occasions.

**LAND STEWARDSHIP AWARD — KATHY AND GEORGE BREZINKA**

Kathy and George Brezinka who live on Big Swan Lake were honored for their work with the Big Swan Lake Association and Big Swan Lake Improvement District (LID). George helped establish the Big Swan Lake Association in 1985 and has served on that board since. George’s work with the LID helped fund water monitoring, outreach activities, and several landowner projects around the lake. George has worked cooperatively with Todd SWCD, the MN DNR, MPCA, and Todd County on issues that could impact Big Swan Lake. George has served on the County Water Plan Committee, and worked cooperatively with the Long Lake Association to promote the “Save the Lake” fundraiser.
Meet Shannon Haasser—Water Planner—A native of Long Prairie Shannon has returned to the area after working in the environmental field in Duluth, MN and completing her MBA in England. She will be responsible for coordinating the Water Plan, Long Prairie River Watershed Project, Enviro-Fest and the Aquatic Invasive Species Program as well as providing shoreland restoration technical support.

Meet Mitch Ness—Wetland/Conservation Technician—Mitch came to the District from the Southern part of the state working with NRCS after graduating from the University of MN Crookston. He grew up in the Staples area and is an avid outdoor enthusiast. He will be handling the wetland conservation program as well as measuring DNR observation wells, assessing tax properties, assisting the feedlot officer and handling the tree program.

Robert “Bob” Krause—Robert “Bob” E. Krause, 76 died peacefully at his home surrounded by his wife and daughters on Tuesday, September 30, 2014 after succumbing to a battle with liver cancer. Bob worked as a teacher before working for the Soil Conservation Service as a District Conservationist, in both Wheaton MN and Long Prairie until he retired. After retiring Bob started a Christmas tree and blueberry farm, and milled lumber with his saw mill. He helped organize Everybody’s Market Food Cooperative and the Headwaters Forestry Cooperative, kept bees, was a Round Prairie township supervisor, and reported monthly to the MN Climatology network for 23 years.

Water Plan Update—The Todd County Comprehensive Local Water Plan is on its 25th anniversary. A Task Force Committee has been convened and is discussing the next generation of Water Plans which is due to be updated January 2016.

As part of the Water Plan process the committee has decided to conduct a survey to gather public input as to the opinions regarding our water resources in Todd County. To complete the survey go to the Todd County website http://www.co.todd.mn.us/ and click on Local Water Management Plan Survey in the left menu bar or pick up a copy at your local library, city hall or USDA/FSA office. Input will help determine project funding priorities over the next five years. The survey ends February 4th, 2015. Thanks for your help!

Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) Program— Anyone that gets out boating much is aware that some waters in Minnesota and other states have become infested with aquatic invasive species (AIS). In Todd County Little Birch Lake and Sauk Lake have Eurasian Milfoil and several Alexandria area lakes have zebra mussels. Aquatic Invasive Species can greatly reduce the ecological function and recreational opportunity once they become established in a lake.

The 2014 Legislative Session enacted Law Chapter 308 to provide Minnesota counties a County Program Aid grant for Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) prevention. The amount designated to each county was based on the number of watercraft trailer launches as well as the number of watercraft trailer parking spaces within each county. Todd County was allocated $73,039 in 2014 and a projected $162,308 for 2015 and each year after.

The county plan is expected to include a variety of prevention strategies such as enforcement of existing AIS rules, watercraft inspections, and a public awareness and outreach program. County efforts will be in addition to existing work being supported and delivered by MN DNR. It is the hope of the legislature that together the county plus MN DNR can reduce the spread of aquatic invasive species and their negative impacts to our lakes.