

Delaware Extension Provides Nutrient Management Workshops

Issue (Who cares and why?)

The Delaware Nutrient Management Act, which was enacted in 1999 to better protect Delaware's watersheds and water quality, included specific guidelines for enterprises that use plant nutrients or dispose of livestock wastes, including agriculture, horticultural concerns, golf courses and lawn care companies. An outreach education program was needed to ensure that Delmarva growers were matching nutrient inputs to plant needs.

What has been done?

University of Delaware Cooperative Extension began offering classes for nutrient management certification in January 2002. The certification program is structured as a series of classes that are offered in various places across Delaware. Individuals that are affected by the Nutrient Management Law are required to attend a minimum of two 3-hour classes, and may, depending on their operation, be required to attend a maximum of 12 hours of training. The law states that all required certifications must be completed by January 1, 2002. The Nutrient Management Program estimates approximately 4,000 individuals will attend the certification classes.

Impact

Response to the certification classes has been excellent. More than 1,700 people attended the first session; 1,200 people returned for the second session; and more than 800 for the third session. The classes attracted people who have been certified in other states, including groups other than poultry growers, including growers with animals other than poultry, the agricultural operators that do not have animals, and other sectors that affect water quality such as lawn care companies and golf courses.

Primary impact area(s)

- Research
- Education
- Extension

Funding

- State (Delaware Nutrient Management Commission)
- Local (Cooperative Extension)

Topics

- Sustainable Agriculture
- Waste Management
- Water Quality

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