

Wisconsin NRCS Update

WCPA Conference

Madison WI

January 16, 2014

NRCS Update

- 590 Nutrient Management Practice Standard
 - Revision process began in March 2013
 - June 2015 target for DRAFT standard
- Major changes to NRCS National Standard
 - Development of guidance for nutrient (manure) application on frozen/snow covered soils
 - Development of a nutrient risk assessment for Nitrogen (Nitrogen Index)
- Other edits requested by 590 users
- 590 Team minutes and agendas posted on the Standards Oversight Council website

NRCS Update

- 590 Nutrient Management Plan Quality Assurance
 - In 2013 Wisconsin NRCS Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) contracts were reviewed by a national Oversight and Evaluation Team
 - FINDING: 590 plan must meet the NRCS practice standard to make financial assistance payment.
 - FINDING: NRCS must have enough documentation in the case file to document practice met the standard.

NRCS Update

- 590 NMP Quality Assurance continued....
 - FY-14 EQIP program participants will be given checklist to provide to their 590 planner
 - Basic 590 plan checklist applies ALL plans
 - Enhanced and Precision 590 only apply FY-14
 - NRCS payment can only be made on acres that fully comply with the 590 practice standard
 - FY-14 Financial Assistance payments are higher
 - 590 planners for EQIP funded contracts MUST be TechReg approved

NRCS Update

- Soil Health Initiative
 - Public/Private Sector acknowledgement of benefits of maintaining a green and growing cover on crop fields for as long as possible
 - Wisconsin NRCS Cover Crop (340) practice standard recommends higher seeding rates to enhance soil health benefits
 - Risk Management Agency no longer considers Cover Crops as a “crop” when defining double cropping IF NRCS termination deadlines are met
 - Harvest of first cutting of alfalfa prior to planting requires approval

NRCS Update

- Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)
 - Pays farmers annually for conservation “enhancements”
 - Enhancements are more generalized activities than NRCS conservation practice standards
 - USDA has positioned CSP as a income enhancement to replace traditional farm programs
 - Farms with stable land base and minimal changes in crop rotations are best match
 - 2014 Sign Up Deadline Extended to February 7

NRCS Update

- Conservation Compliance
 - NRCS status reviews continue to find 10% of randomly selected Tracts to have fields with soil erosion > 2T
 - New aerial imagery released to NRCS/FSA this winter will identify additional clearing of HEL and Wetlands
 - Current DRAFT Farm Bill re-links Federal Crop Insurance benefits to HEL/Wetland Compliance

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