

Federal Framework for Balancing Agriculture and the Environment




Opportunities for Collaboration

EPA Region 4, NRCS, & CSREES

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Division**

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EPA Region 4's Framework for Agriculture and the Environment

"a strategy specifically for agriculture"

Why we are developing a strategy specifically for agriculture?

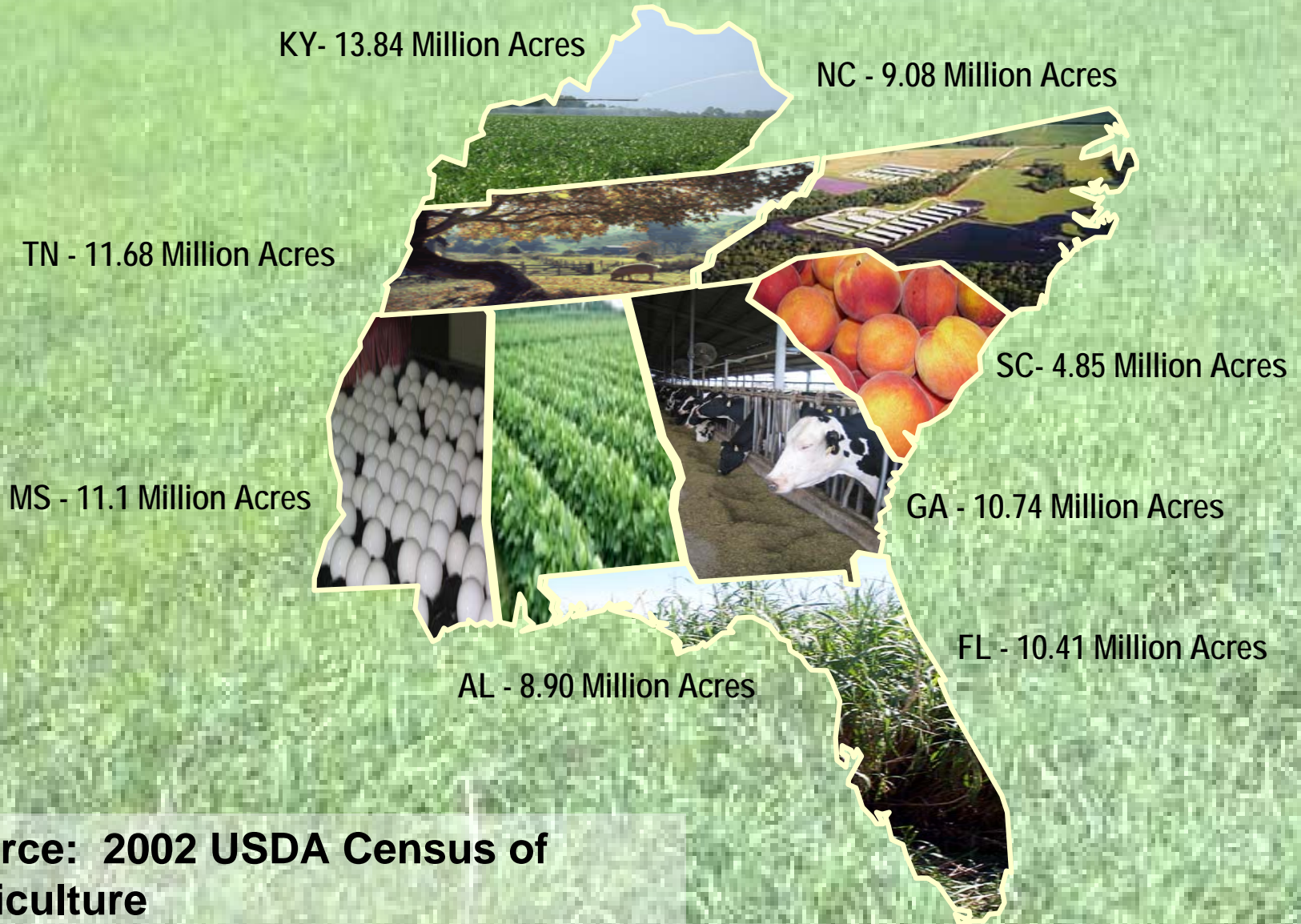
- Agriculture is critical to the economy, culture, history and environment of the Southeast.
- This document will be a FRAMEWORK to enhance coordination and awareness of agricultural issues and concerns in EPA Region 4.



**R4 States have a total of
80.6 Million Acres of Farmland**

**8.59% of the NATIONAL
TOTAL**

Region 4 Acres of Farmland by State

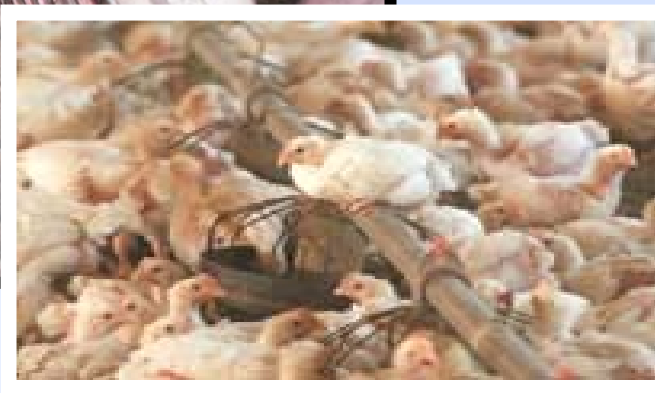


Source: 2002 USDA Census of Agriculture

Trends

Current and future environmental issues
related to agriculture in Region 4.

Animal Feeding Operations (AFO) Confined Animal Feeding Operations (CAFO)



Collection of Air Emissions Inventory Data

Air Permitting



**Diesel
Collaboration**

Agriculture Burning





Reduced Risk Pesticide Alternatives/Integrated Pest Management (IPM)



Pesticide Waste and Container Disposal



Genetically Modified **Organisms (GMO)**

Pharmaceuticals

Methyl Bromide Alternatives



Worker Protection



**Environmental
Justice**

Water Quality

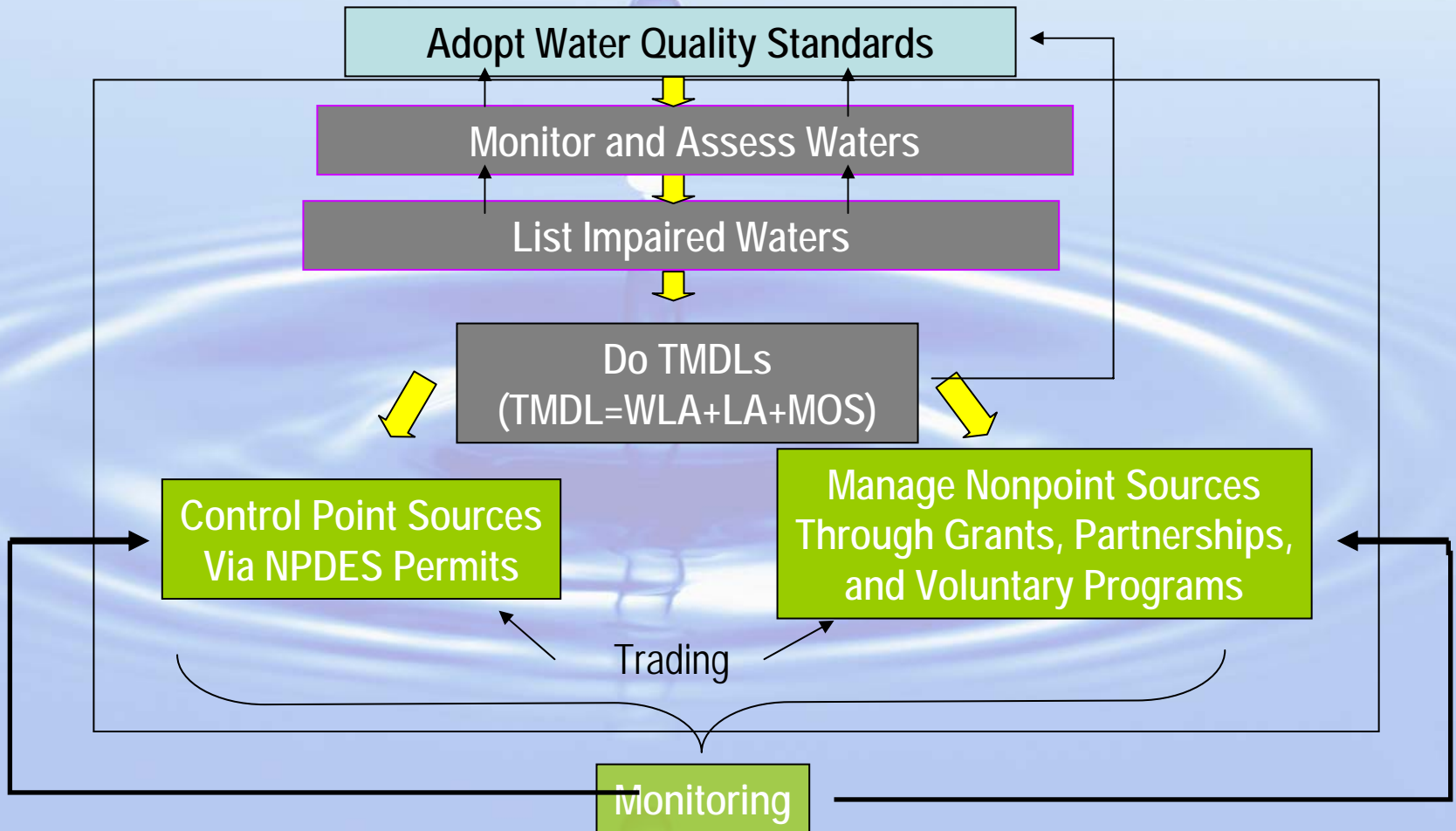
Protecting Every Precious Drop!

In simple terms, our job is to assure citizens in the Southeast that they have good water and that this resource will be protected and restored to the extent federal legislation provides.



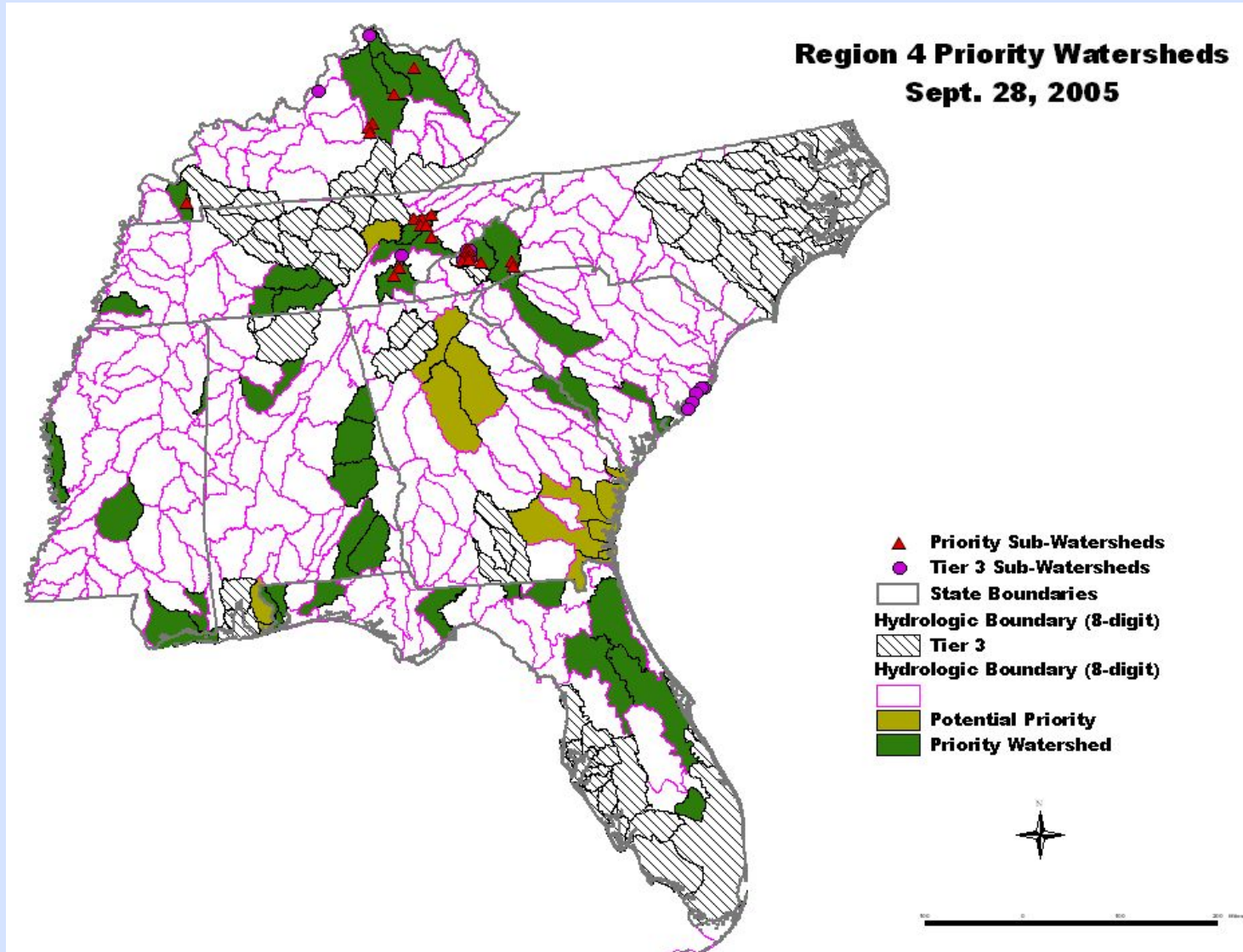
Adequate and safe water resources are required for all human activity - it has always been that way and it will always be.

Water Quality Management Planning Cycle (TMDL)

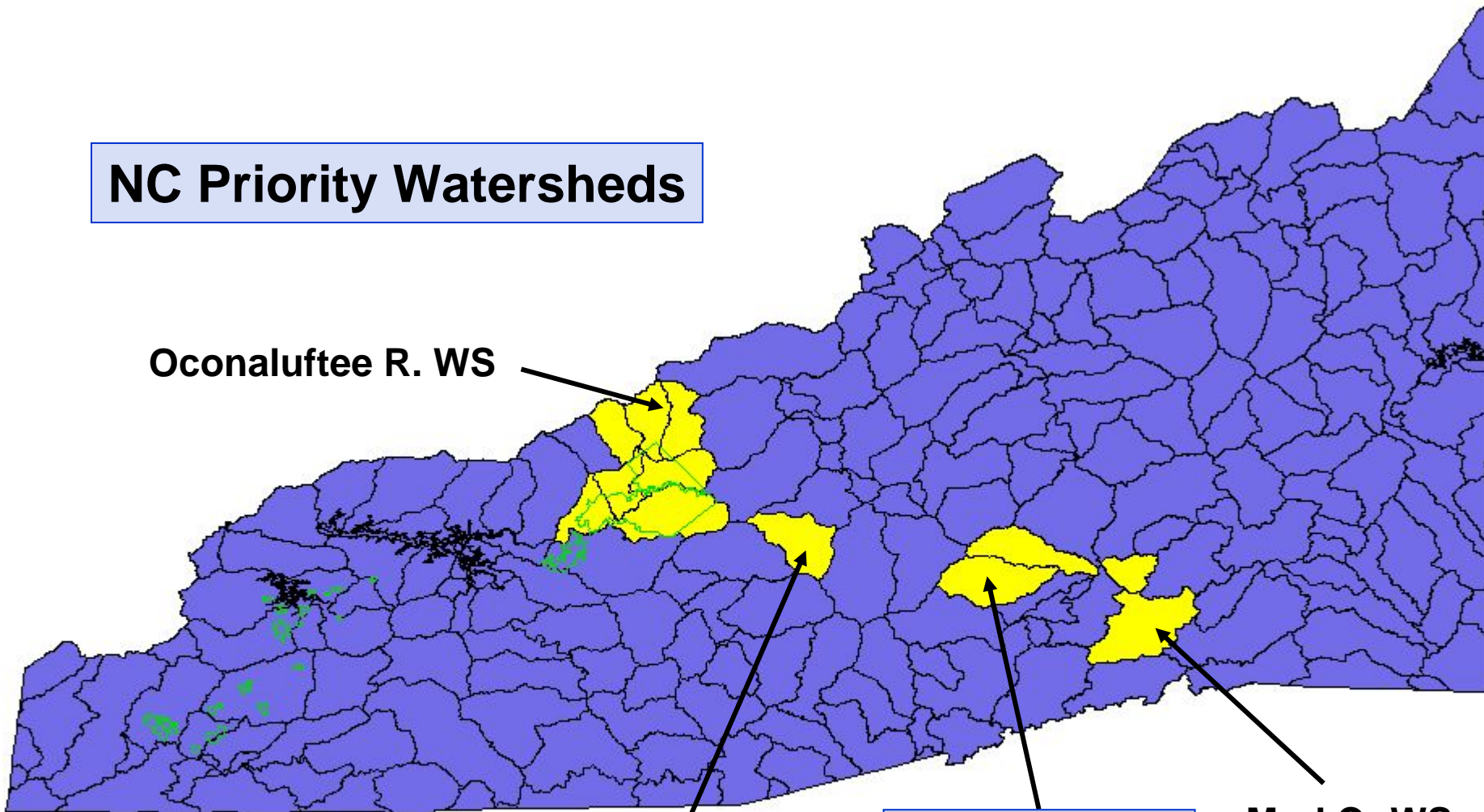




Watershed Focus



NC Priority Watersheds





Oconaluftee R. WS

Richland Cr WS

Mills R. WS

Mud Cr WS

-  Cherokee Lands
-  Subwatersheds

Mills River Watershed Project

(listing - biological integrity specialty
crop production)

- Water Supply Watershed
- Channelization
- Stream Restoration and Buffers
- Development
- Specialty Crops



Henderson



Cattle Feeding Structure



Cattle Feeding Structure



Constructed Wetland
Van Wingerden Corporation

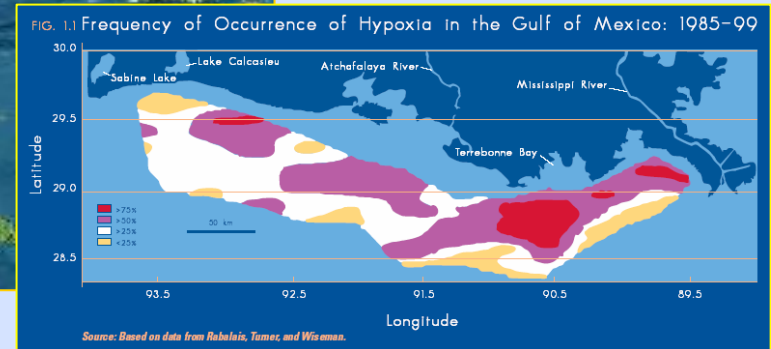


Needs Farmland Preservation Program



Hypoxia in the Gulf of Mexico

from nutrient over-enrichment



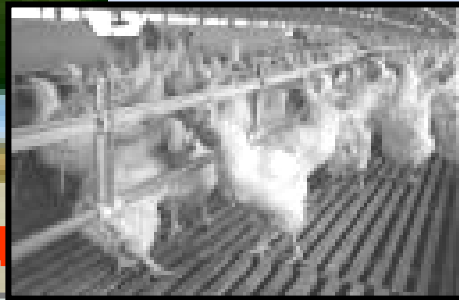


Drinking Water/Source Water Protection



Biological threats

Bio-terrorism



Avian Flu

**Bovine Spongiform Encephalitis
(BSE)**

“Mad Cow Disease”



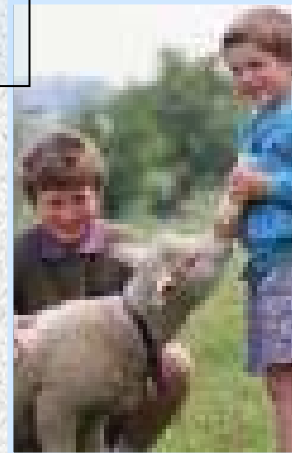
Conversion of Agriculture Lands for Urban Development

National Resources

Inventory 1992-1997

6,172,800 acres of Agricultural land converted to developed uses

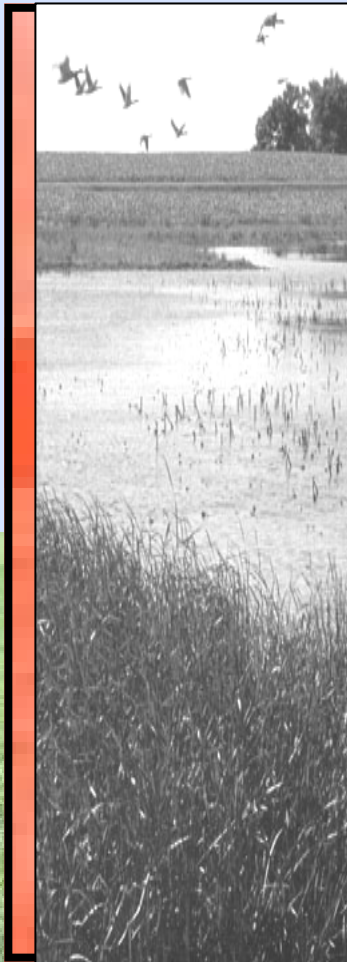
Farmland Information Center website



Agriculture Environmental Management Systems (EMS)

Technical Assistance

EPA Region 4's Environmental Goals Related to Agriculture EPA Strategic Goals



EPA is committed to environmental outcomes as stated in the goals in our Strategic Plan

- **Air**
- **Pesticides**
- **Water**
- **Waste**



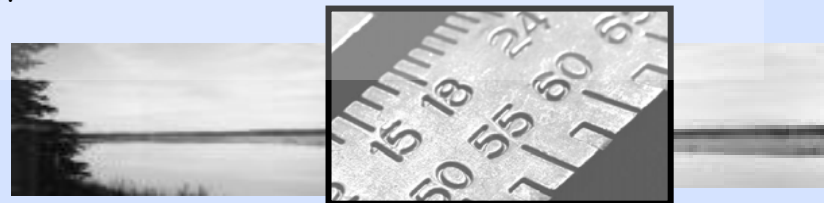
EPA Region 4's Environmental Goals Related to Agriculture **Examples include:**

Strategic Goal: By 2012, EPA will work with partners to fully attain water quality standards in over 25 percent of those waterbodies identified in 2000 as not attaining standards, with an interim milestone of restoring 5 percent of these waters by 2006.

Strategic Goal: EPA will make healthier watersheds by reducing nutrient levels to meet water quality standards in 30% of test sites for farmland streams by 2008 (1992-98 Baseline: 25%).

Strategic Goal: EPA will work with partners to achieve a net increase of 400,000 acres of wetlands with additional focus on biological and functional measures by 2008.

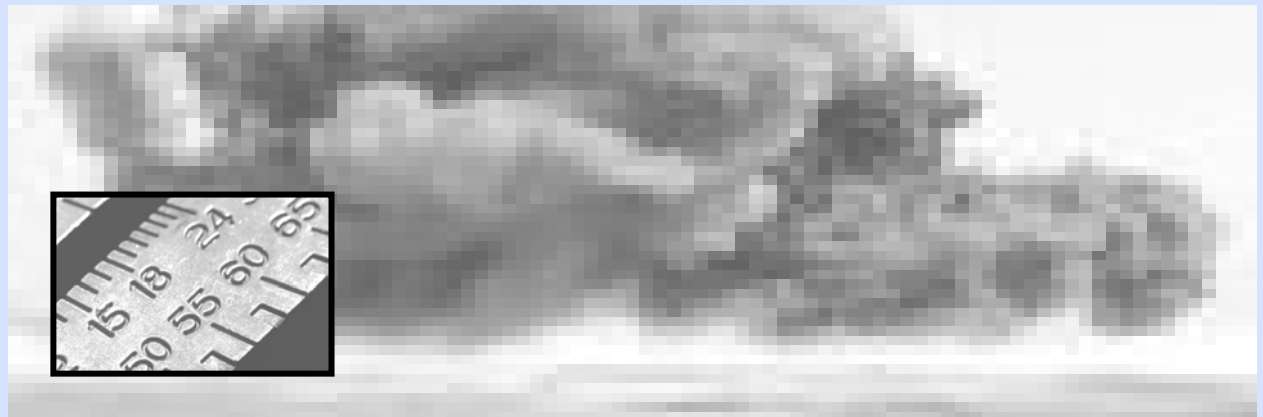
Strategic Goal: To protect the Gulf of Mexico by decreasing the hypoxic zone, EPA will reduce releases of nutrients throughout the Mississippi River Basin from a baseline of 14,128 km², to a target of less than 5,000 km² by 2015.



EPA Region 4's Environmental Goals Related to Agriculture **Examples include:**

Strategic Goal: Reduce millions of tons of PM, VOC, and NOx emissions nationwide from diesel exhaust from on-road and non-road agricultural sources.

Strategic Goal: By 2010, working with ag partners, reduce air toxics emissions and implement local, area-specific approaches to reduce the risk to public health and the environment from toxic air pollutants



EPA Region 4's Guiding Principles

Two- Pronged: Emphasize the importance of collaboration with partners to achieve outcomes.

EPA Region 4 will coordinate by focusing on Region-wide initiatives with key commodity groups.

We will also coordinate by focusing on what farmers need in priority areas.

1. **Place Based:** **Based on the farmer's perspective.** Attempting to present a single face for EPA, not a number of disjointed programs. Focus on key environmental concerns.
2. **Regional:** Examples include the bio-diesel initiative and the Gulf of Mexico Hypoxic Zone.

EPA Region 4's Guiding Principles

Maximize Available Resources: In a resource-limited environment we need to coordinate resources and expertise within the Region to achieve our environmental outcomes.

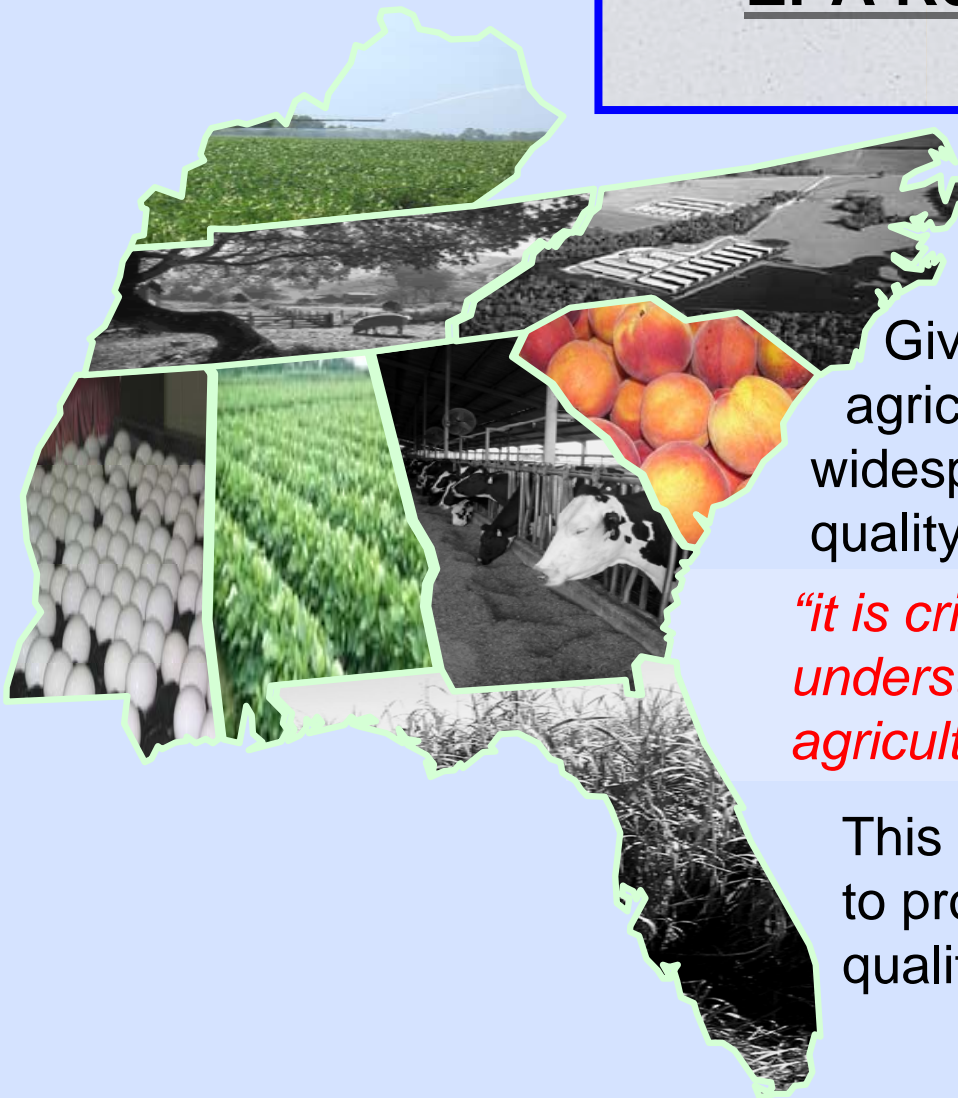
EPA Region 4's Guiding Principles

Improve Understanding of Issues and Needs:

Given the unique nature of the agriculture sector in the Southeast, and its widespread impacts on environmental quality,

“it is critical for EPA staff to have a basic understanding of how decisions are made in agriculture.”

This is necessary to improve our ability to protect and restore water and air quality.



EPA Region 4's Guiding Principles

Increase Awareness of Regulations: Farmers in particular, and the agriculture sector in general, face an often bewildering array of regulations just from EPA, not to mention other federal, state, and local government agencies.

The overwhelming majority of farmers want to do the right thing, but often need help to comply.

- Compliance Assistance programs
- Unified Animal Feeding Operations Strategy

EPA Region 4's Guiding Principles

Share Information: A guiding principle in EPA Region 4 will be for our programs to share information more with each other, as well as with key partners in the public and private sector.

Information specifically refers to suspected impacts from agriculture on our environment, specific concerns, and examples of progress and success upon which to build.

EPA Region 4's Process for Working with the Agriculture Sector

Current Processes:

Region 4's multi-media Agricultural Workgroup

Division-level workgroups such as the Pesticides Stewardship Committee

Senior staff-level advisors on agriculture in the Water and Air, Pesticides and Toxics Management, and Waste Divisions



EPA Region 4's Process for Working with the Agriculture Sector

Current Processes:

Federal liaisons:

- USDA-Cooperative State Research Education and Extension Service (CSREES),
- USDA-Natural Resources and Conservation Service (NRCS),
- US Forest Service and,
- US Geographic Information Service

have been assigned to EPA Region 4.



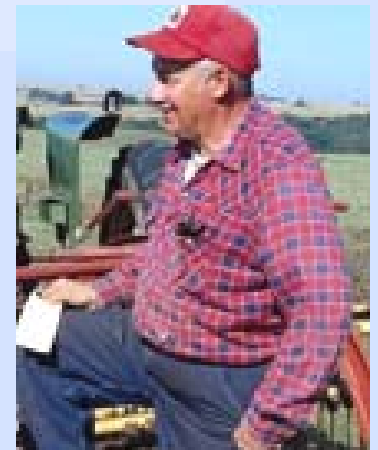
Currently have one liaison from Extension. **Responsible for establishing communication which will enhance relations and help facilitate partnerships between USDA-CSREES, EPA and the eight Land-grant Universities and nine 1890 Land-grants in this Region.**

EPA Region 4's Process for Working with the Agriculture Sector

National Ag. Sector Contacts Workgroup:

Office of Enforcement and
Compliance Assistance (OECA)
Rick Colbert & Ginah Mortensen

Office of the Agriculture
Counselor to the Administrator
Jon Scholl



EPA Region 4's Process for Working with the Agriculture Sector

Current Partnerships:

Key partnerships in which EPA is engaged with the agricultural sector.

Examples include the “Industry Led Solutions Initiative”.

Watershed Education Network (WEN) Southern Region Partnership with EPA Region 4

The Watershed Education Network (WEN) is a workgroup comprised of Extension and EPA professionals it is the premier program for watershed education, and training programs in Region 4

– Connie Alexander – Office of Watersheds



EPA Region 4's Process for Working with the Agriculture Sector

Future Processes and Partnerships:

Agriculture is of great importance to the vitality of the Southeast, from both an economical and social perspective. Region 4 is committed to working collaboratively with agriculture and our federal partners on environmental issues important to this industry. Our framework is designed to provide a focus and structure to our efforts.

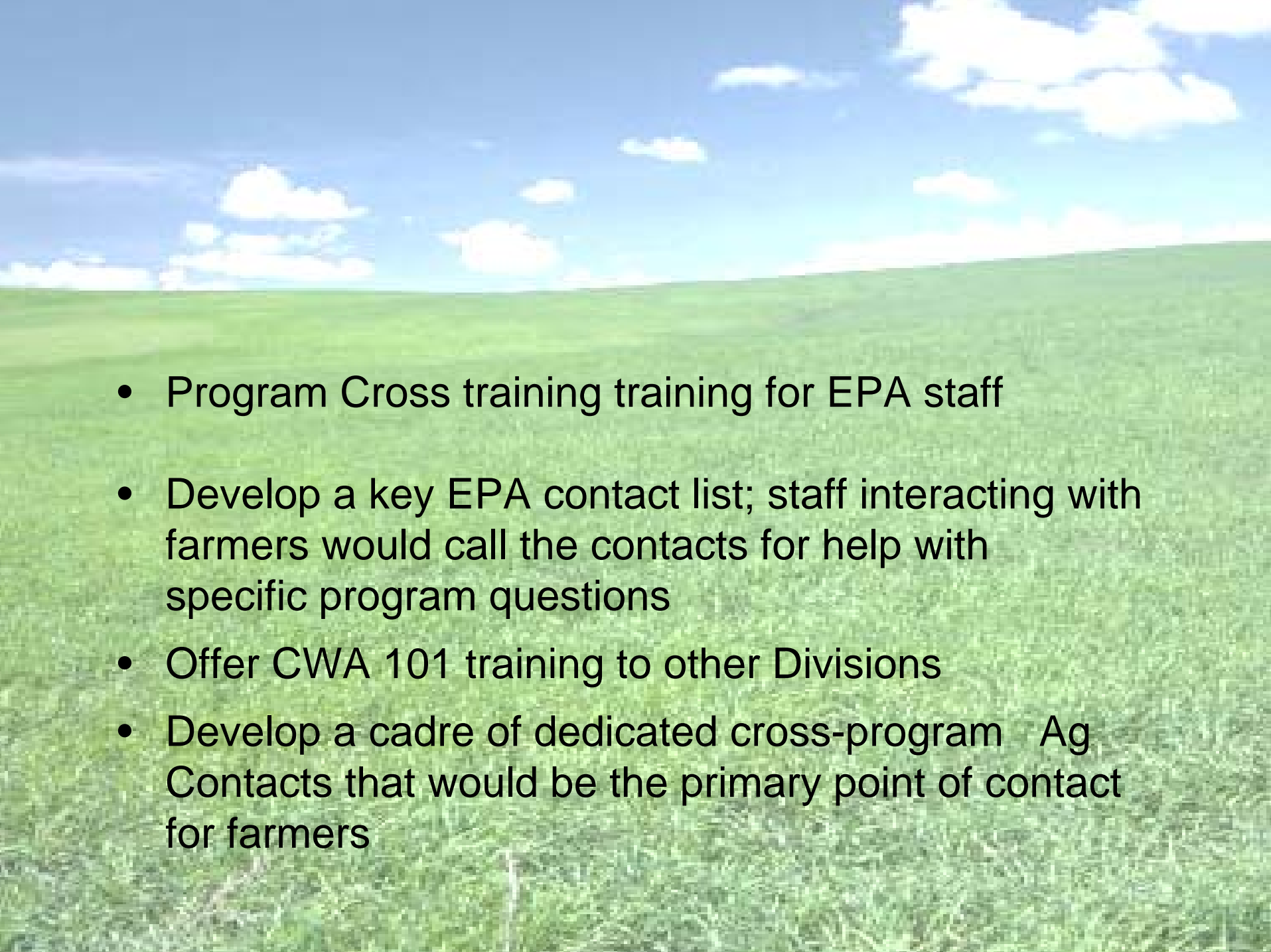



EPA Region 4's Process for Working with the Agriculture Sector


Future Processes and Partnerships:

- Appointing a senior advisor to represent EPA Region 4 and advise our Executive Management Team.
- Continued support of cross-program workgroups in EPA Region 4
- Staff development
- Integrating agriculture into strategy and action planning in EPA Region 4



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- Program Cross training training for EPA staff
 - Develop a key EPA contact list; staff interacting with farmers would call the contacts for help with specific program questions
 - Offer CWA 101 training to other Divisions
 - Develop a cadre of dedicated cross-program Ag Contacts that would be the primary point of contact for farmers

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- Look at simplifying grant requirements
 - Examine on-farm technologies/recommendations that transfer pollution between media
 - Establish a Regional Assistance Center (like the national Compliance Center).
 - Use EPA Finance centers

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- Attend NRCS State Technical Committee Meetings
 - EPA Watershed coordinators work with DCs in priority watersheds for restoration
 - Wider commenting on proposed regulations