



USDA-CSREES 2005 National Water Quality Conference

The National Agriculture Compliance Assistance Center

Abstract: Text: Situation: The "first stop" for people in the agricultural community who need information on compliance with environmental regulations is the National Agriculture Compliance Assistance Center. Offered by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) with the support of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), the Ag Center offers comprehensive, easy-to-understand information about approaches to compliance that are both environmentally protective and agriculturally sound.

Objectives: The Ag Center -- a part of EPA's Office of Compliance -- is focusing first on providing information about EPA's own requirements. The Center relies heavily on existing sources of agricultural information and established distribution channels. Through a variety of channels, including a toll-free phone number and this website, the Ag Center provides growers, livestock producers, other agribusinesses, and agricultural information/education providers easy access to its resources.

Methods: USDA and other agencies provide educational and technical information on agricultural production, but assistance in complying with environmental requirements has not been as readily accessible. The Ag Center is working with USDA and other federal and state agencies to provide the agricultural community with a definitive source for federal environmental compliance information. The Ag Center offers information on a variety of topics, including: Pesticides, Animal waste management, Groundwater and surface water, Tanks / containment, Solid / hazardous waste. The Ag Center also supports regional and state regulatory agencies in their effort to provide compliance assistance to local agricultural communities.

Partnerships: USDA and others

Resources: The Ag Center offers a variety of products and services, including: the website, <http://www.epa.gov/agriculture/index.html>, which is regularly updated and expanded with current news, compliance policies and guidelines, pollution prevention information, sources of additional information and expertise, and summaries of regulatory initiatives and requirements user-friendly materials that consolidate information about compliance requirements, pollution prevention, and technical assistance resources for use by regional and state assistance educational programs, trade associations, businesses, citizens, and local governments agriculture-related information on reducing pollution and using the latest pollution prevention methods and technologies common-sense, flexible ways to reduce the costs of meeting environmental requirements, including identification of barriers to compliance.

Integration of Research, Teaching, and Extension: By partnering with CSREES and Landgrants this effort incorporates research, teaching and extension.

Results: The Ag Center can help you find cost-effective ways to prevent pollution and comply with environmental regulations. The Center offers: plain-language materials, toll-free contact number, 1-888-663-2155, referrals to sources of help and additional information

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