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North American Commission for Environmental Cooperation

Three countries working together to protect our shared environment

Comparative Standards for Intensive Livestock Operations in North America

**Mexico City
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- Why this Study?
 - Environmental issues
 - Public concern
 - Development of unified markets
 - Beginning of consolidation in Mexico



- Typical Regulatory Devices
 - Permits
 - Nutrient Management Plans (NMPs)
 - Setback requirements
 - Public information requirements
 - Professional certification
 - Financial guarantees
 - Technical assistance



- **Definitions**
 - Canada: defined in 8 of 10 provinces
 - 150-400 “units” – “units” definitions vary
 - Mexico: none
 - United States
 - Defines “large”, “medium” and “small”
 - States: Varies – as low as 10 “units” in some sensitive areas (e.g. shorelands in MN)



- Permits required?
 - Canada
 - Yes, in 8 of 10 provinces; conditionally in 2
 - Mexico
 - Constructing and operating permits; national water standards for discharges to public waters
 - United States
 - Federal water permit or “no potential to discharge” determination; many states require permits for smaller operations



- Public notice required?
 - Canada
 - Generally yes
 - Mexico
 - Generally, no. Some notice for utilization of public utilities, etc.
 - United States
 - Yes



- Setback distances?
 - Canada
 - Yes, in all provinces. Requirements vary.
 - Mexico
 - No.
 - United States
 - Yes, in federal law and most states; requirements vary



- Geophysical requirements?
 - Canada
 - Yes, in 8 of 10 provinces (e.g., separation from water tables; avoid flood plains)
 - Mexico
 - ILOs banned in areas of water scarcity; some flood plain restrictions
 - United States
 - None in federal law. Yes, in 16 of 20 states, generally to avoid 100-year floodplain.



- Government review of site required?
 - Canada
 - Yes, under some circumstances, in 6 of 10 provinces
 - Mexico
 - Generally, no. Changes from forest to agriculture requires EIA
 - United States
 - Yes, under some circumstances in 13 of 20 states



- Government approval of plans?
 - Canada
 - Yes, under some circumstances in 6 of 10 provinces
 - Mexico
 - No
 - United States
 - Yes, under some circumstances, in federal law and in all 20 states



- Nutrient Management Plan required?
 - Canada
 - Yes, in 6 of 10 provinces
 - Mexico
 - No
 - United States
 - Yes, in federal law and in all 20 states surveyed



- General Observations
 - Numerous Data Gaps
 - Inconclusive as to whether variations in environmental regulations influence siting decisions.



- Recommendations
 - Though countries, states, provinces or local governments may be justified in having standards different from their neighbours, caution must be exercised to avoid the “race to the bottom” effect
 - Greater uniformity in requirements for NMPs, setbacks, public information and participation, and professional certification would be beneficial



- Governments should carefully consider the relative responsibilities of agricultural and environmental agencies in relations to ILOs
- Development and implementation of new waste treatment and pollution prevention technologies should be encouraged
- Imposing some responsibility for environmental impacts on “integrators” would be more equitable and likely improve environmental performance by producers



- Improved systems for collecting information on ILOs and for surveying regulation and enforcement in each country should be developed
- Better data for tracking foreign direct investment in ILOs is needed
- Worker health, antibiotic, hormone and pathogen issues deserve improved data collection and significant public attention