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NEWS RELEASE

United States Department of Agriculture • Natural Resources Conservation Service • 210 Walnut Street
Room 693 • Des Moines, IA 50309 • Phone: (515) 284-4262 • Web: http://www.ia.nrcs.usda.gov

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Contact:
Dave Brommel, EQIP Program Manager
515-284-4353

Biofilters Now Eligible Practice Through EQIP

Des Moines, Iowa—Iowa livestock producers with confinement operations can now apply to receive financial assistance through the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) to install biofilters, odor-reducing structures fit to the outlet of confinement exhaust fans.

Through the USDA's Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), eligible producers can receive $2.50 per animal unit for three years, with a cap of 1,500 animal units, to install and maintain biofilters. EQIP is a voluntary conservation program through NRCS that promotes environmental quality in agricultural production.

A biofilter is a device or structure containing an organic material that filters out particulates. It contains active bacteria attached to the organic material that break down odorous compounds as they pass through the filter. It is a living ecosystem of microorganisms that continually feed on odorous gases.

Larry Beeler, NRCS assistant state conservationist for programs, says EQIP is available to help agricultural producers protect air quality and reduce the need for regulatory programs. "There is more awareness of air quality issues than ever before," he said. "We are offering biofilters as an eligible air quality management practice through EQIP as an incentive to producers who have considered installing odor-reducing practices and want to be proactive."

According to Steven Hoff, Ph.D., P.E., an associate professor in Iowa State University's Department of Agricultural and Biosystems Engineering, biofilters are very effective in reducing odor when designed correctly. His research indicates a reduction in odorous gases after emission from a biofilter compared to an unfiltered exhaust fan.

For more information about biofilters, visit your local NRCS or Iowa State University Extension office.

Other resources include:

- The University of Minnesota at www.bbe.umn.edu/extens/faq/biofilterfaq.html
- South Dakota State University Extension at http://agbio.sdstate.edu/livestock_dev/

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