

GONZALES COUNTY SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
WATER QUALITY MANAGEMENT PLAN
DEVELOPMENT, IMPLEMENTATION AND/OR MAINTENANCE ASSISTANCE

FINAL REPORT

Clean Water Act, Section 319(h) Non-Point Source Grant
TSSWCB Project # 01-10



USDA – Natural Resources Conservation Service
Gonzales, Texas

Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board Regional Office
Wharton, Texas

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INTRODUCTION

The Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board (TSSWCB) Clean Water Act, Section 319(h) Non-Point Source Grant was for Water Quality Management Plan Development, Implementation and/or Maintenance Assistance in Gonzales County. The Gonzales County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) worked cooperatively with the TSSWCB to provide technical and financial assistance for the implementation and maintenance of Water Quality Management Plans (WQMP) to poultry producers in Gonzales County.

Two technicians were initially hired to complete the task of developing WQMP's and implementing the cost share program. The SWCD hired Linda Rathmann from 9/01 to 11/03 and Ted Reiley from 9/01 to 10/04. Shari Johnson was later hired from 11/03 to 8/05. These technicians developed WQMP's, attended meetings, completed reports and conducted workshops and status reviews. Interaction with poultry producers was done on a daily basis to assist them with plan compliance and management.

Monthly and quarterly reports were submitted to the TSSWCB Project Manager detailing the progress and budget of the project.

Technical assistance was provided for the development of 102 new WQMP's, 19 Certified Revisions and ongoing maintenance of 154 currently active plans. These plans included guidance for mortality disposal, waste utilization and storage systems and nutrient management. Best Management Practices (BMP's) were also determined for each individual WQMP developed. These WQMP locations were indicated on a map of Gonzales County with a supporting BMP list for each.

Status Reviews were conducted to ensure the plans were being followed or update the plan with any new or deleted practices. 153 Status Reviews were conducted during the life of the project.

Cost share assistance was also offered to the producers with a WQMP. Designs were calculated and implemented for stack sheds, composters and incinerators. Brush control, grass planting and water wells were also available for funding. The Gonzales County SWCD oversaw the construction and/or installation of 3 dry litter stack sheds, 1 combination stack shed with composter, 2 incinerators, 1 water well and 118 acres of brush management with 20 acres of grass planting. Soil and litter samples were also collected and offered free of charge for the producer. This was a very successful program for maintaining plan compliance while helping the producer financially.

INTRODUCTION (Continued)

In addition to individual assistance, two educational workshops were held for the poultry producers discussing the components of a WQMP and informing them of the latest rules and regulations. With increasing stipulations from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ), new permitting requirements were introduced to the poultry community. This affected the plan requirements and compliance, as well. The technicians attended informative meetings held by TSSWCB, TCEQ and EPA regarding these issues. This helped the technicians filter the information to provide better guidance to the local producers requiring permits. The Technicians also attended monthly SWCD Board of Directors meetings and NRCS staff meetings. Other informative meetings were attended discussing the status of two impaired watersheds in Gonzales County.

PROJECT ACCOMPLISHMENTS BY TASK

TASK 1: PROGRAM COORDINATION with PROJECT PARTICIPANTS

Objective: Two Technicians will be hired by the Gonzales County SWCD to coordinate technical assistance activities in the Gonzales County SWCD between the TSSWCB, local SWCD's, NRCS, poultry integrators and all other interested parties to achieve the highest level of assistance for poultry producers in the Gonzales County SWCD.

Subtask 1.1 The Gonzales County SWCD will hire two Technicians for the purpose of developing, implementing and/or maintaining WQMP's and other tasks as necessary for completion of this project.

The SWCD initially hired two Technicians in September 2001. After the resignation of the two, another Technician was hired in November 2003.

Subtask 1.2 The Technicians hired through this project will meet with State Board personnel semi-annually at the State Board headquarters in Temple, TX to review project progress, events, future activities, etc.

Regular meetings and correspondence were conducted between the TSSWCB in Temple and Wharton and the Gonzales County SWCD to monitor progress and status of the project and individual plans.

Subtask 1.3 The Technicians will coordinate and conduct semi-annual meetings with the Gonzales County SWCD, TSSWCB personnel, poultry integrators, NRCS and others interested to discuss technical assistance activities.

The SWCD Technicians met with program participants and assisted customers on a daily basis. They also attended monthly SWCD Board Meetings and NRCS Staff Meetings. The Technicians conducted and/or participated in numerous meetings between the TSSWCB, NRCS, TCEQ, Texas Poultry Federation, Texas Cooperative Extension, Cal-Maine Foods, Holmes Foods, Maxim and Tyson Foods to discuss WQMP components and other poultry related issues.

Subtask 1.4 The Technicians will complete and submit quarterly reports to the TSSWCB project manager.

Quarterly Reports were generated for MBE/WBE Utilization, Soil and Litter Sample Program and Project Progress including Agendas and Minutes of SWCD Board of Director Meetings and other pertinent information. All Quarterly Reports have been completed and submitted to the TSSWCB Project Manager.

Subtask 1.5 The Technicians will complete and submit a final report to the TSSWCB at the culmination of the project. This report will be completed on CD, as well as, in the form of hard copies.

A Final Report was provided to the TSSWCB Project Manager in electronic format, CD and hard copy. Additional hard copies were provided to the SWCD Board of Directors and the NRCS District Conservationist.

TASK 2: DEVELOPMENT, IMPLEMENTATION and/or MAINTENANCE of WQMP'S

Objective: The objective of this task is to provide technical and financial assistance to landowners in the Gonzales County SWCD through development, implementation and/or maintenance of WQMP's.

Subtask 2.1 The Technicians will notify producers in the Gonzales County SWCD announcing a sign up period for technical and financial assistance available through the Gonzales County SWCD. The assistance will be concentrated toward the development and maintenance of WQMP's and soils testing. This will be accomplished through the newspaper, letters to producers, etc.

The Technicians advertised available assistance through the Gonzales Inquirer newspaper, Guadalupe Valley Farmer-Rancher publication, local radio station KCTI and producer contact through their integrators and direct mailings.

Subtask 2.2 The Technicians, with assistance from NRCS, poultry integrators, TSSWCB Wharton Regional Office and others involved, will provide landowners with information on appropriate best management practices and will work with landowners in developing, implementing and maintaining WQMP's within the Gonzales County SWCD. The TSSWCB, with assistance from NRCS, will provide the needed training for the two Technicians on the development of WQMP's.

The Technicians developed 102 certified plans, completed 19 certified revisions and maintained a total of 193 plans (at project end, 154 plans were active). Included in these plans was a Conservation Plan of Operations detailing the Best Management Practices (BMP's) for each operation. The Technicians also attended trainings hosted by NRCS covering Pest Management, Waste Utilization/Nutrient Management and GPS and Tool-kit Training.

Subtask 2.3 The Technicians, with assistance from the Wharton Regional Office, will create a map showing the location of all WQMP's implemented and developed within the Gonzales County SWCD throughout the project.

A map showing plans with Best Management Practices was created and submitted to the TSSWCB Project Manager quarterly. A final map showing all plans implemented throughout the project is attached.

Subtask 2.4 The Technicians will conduct Annual Status Reviews on all WQMP's developed through the project.

Annual Status Reviews were conducted on 153 WQMP's.

Subtask 2.5 The Technicians will assist producers in the acquisition of current soils tests through utilization of project funding

Approximately 2,300 Soil and 415 Litter samples were acquired throughout the duration of the project. This program was offered free for the producer with nearly \$30,000.00 spent through project funding.

TASK 3: EDUCATION and TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER

Objective: The objective of this task is to provide poultry producers in the Gonzales County SWCD with proper information that is pertinent to poultry operation and compliance. This information will be disseminated through workshops and other events as needed.

Subtask 3.1 The Technicians will coordinate and conduct a minimum of two workshops throughout the duration of the project. These workshops should cover topics such as proper soil and litter sampling and other issues affecting the poultry industry.

Two workshops were conducted covering soil sampling, proper litter application, rules and regulations, mortality management and plan management. Additional meetings addressed the producers needing general permits. The poultry community also learned of the EQIP program through informative meetings and press releases. Texas Cooperative Extension and the SWCD sponsored an annual field day offering CEU credits. Topics included soil sampling and fertility, brush management, grazing programs and pesticide rules, regulations and safety.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION FOR PROJECT TASKS

SUBTASK 1.1 – JOB ANNOUNCEMENT

Published June 19 – 29, 2001 – The Gonzales Inquirer

JOB ANNOUNCEMENT

Location: Gonzales, Texas

Title: District Technician (Two Positions Available)

Application Period: June 14 to June 29, 2001

Introduction:

The primary purpose of this full-time position is to provide technical services, on-site assistance, and related tasks necessary to complete the work as described in the Cooperative Agreement between the Gonzales County Soil and Water Conservation District (District) and the Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board (TSSWCB). This position is governed by the policies established by the District and the fiscal operations guidelines of the TSSWCB.

Qualifications:

Experience and Education - Experience in planning and compiling and analyzing data and information. Graduation from an accredited four year college or university with major course work in agriculture, watershed management, environmental science, natural resource conservation, or a related field is generally preferred. Experience and education may be substituted for one another.

Duties and Accomplishments:

1. Provide technical assistance to producers in conservation planning & application.
2. Receives applications for financial assistance contracts under the 319 project.
3. Prepares Water Quality Management Plans to the District Board for approval.
4. Submits approved plans to TSSWCB for certification.
5. Maintains contact with producers having certified plans.
6. Submits documentation of completed practices for approval by District Board and Forwards to TSSWCB for certification.
7. Provide technical assistance to producers in development of conservation plans that do not result in financial assistance contracts. Maintains files on all plans.
8. Cooperate fully with any guidance, assistance and activity that may be provided by the Natural Resources Conservation Service.
9. Conduct status reviews on all Water Quality Management Plans within the SWCD.
10. Carry out duties within the workplan.
11. Performs any other duties as may be determined by the District Board.

Salary: \$28,000 and benefits

How to apply: Send application and resume to the Gonzales County Soil & Water Conservation District office. Telephone and address listed above!

Application must be postmarked by June 29, 2001.

The Gonzales Co. Soil and Water Conservation District is an equal opportunity employer, and does not discriminate against job applicants or employees on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability or veteran's status.

SUBTASK 2.1 – PRODUCER NOTIFICATION of PROGRAM ASSISTANCE

Poultry producers offered aid in reducing pollution runoff

The Texas Commission on Environmental Quality has run studies on two creek segments in the Lower Middle Guadalupe River Basin.

The Peach Creek segment is considered impaired, and there will be future studies to identify the sources of pollution and cost-effective control techniques.

Poultry producers in the Lower Middle Guadalupe watershed can apply for technical and financial assistance to reduce runoff pollution.

The program targets poultry producers and landowners that fertilize with poultry litter. Plans to be developed are done on a voluntary basis at the request of the producer.

More than \$80,000 is available for the project. Funding is through the Environmental Protection Agency and administered by the Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board.

The TSSWCB, with state offices in Temple, is the lead agency for the planning, management and abatement of agricultural and silvicultural nonpoint source pollution in the state. The EPA grant pays 50 percent of the cost of implementing a BMP (best management practice) or conservation measure best suited for remediation of the situation. Funding is limited to \$10,000 per producer.

The TSSWCB provides funding to local soil and water conservation districts to implement activities designed to reduce nonpoint sources of pollution which include agriculture.

Practices offered in the program include "stacksheds, composters, incinerators, brush management (mechanical and chemical) and pasture planting."

The Gonzales County Soil and Water Conservation District will accept applications from Jan. 2 through Feb. 5, 2003. For more information, call 672-8371, extension 3, or come by

920 St. Joseph Street, Room 142.

The Gonzales County SWCD prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities

on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation or marital or family status.

The Gonzales Inquirer
Friday, December 13, 2002 ■ Page 5

Financial assistance available for fight to reduce phosphorus runoff locally

www.tsswcb.state.tx.us, 12-18

The Texas Commission on Environmental Quality has run studies on two creek segments in the Lower Middle Guadalupe River Basin.

The Peach Creek segments is considered impaired with future studies to identify the sources of pollution and cost effective control techniques.

Poultry producers in the LMG watershed can apply for technical and financial assistance to reduce runoff pollution.

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Published December 27, 2002 – The Gonzales Inquirer

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Published January 21, 2003 – The Gonzales Inquirer

Deadline passes to submit water quality plans

The deadline to request certification of a water quality management plan through the Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board and local soil and water conservation districts has passed for some Texas poultry producers.

Any poultry facility that began operation between Jan. 1, 1988 and Dec. 31, 1992 must have submitted a request for a water quality management plan by Jan. 1, 2003.

Each poultry facility must develop and submit a site-specific WQMP for certification. Once poultry producers submit a WQMP to the state board, they are in compliance with the law even while the WQMP is pending certification by the board.

The law offers protection for poultry producers despite the WQMP requirement. Enforcement action cannot be brought against the facility for nonpoint source pollution as long as the poultry facility is in compliance with the WQMP.

Producers who have failed to submit a WQMP for their facility by the appropriate submission deadline are subject to enforcement action by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality. This requirement is a

result of the passage of Senate Bill 1339 during the 76th session of the Texas Legislature.

For more information regarding the deadline, contact John Foster at 254-773-2250, ext. 235, at TSSWCB headquarters in Temple.

The Gonzales Inquirer
Tuesday, January 29, 2002 ■ Page 5

Gonzales County SWCD to help producers improve water quality

Agricultural producers in the Gonzales County Soil and Water Conservation District have the opportunity to comply with state water quality laws through a voluntary, incentive-based program.

The program is implemented through the Gonzales SWCD. Funding for this project comes as a

grant from the Environmental Protection Agency through the Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board to the Gonzales SWCD for implementation.

The Gonzales SWCD office oversees the program and provides technical assistance to landowners to develop and implement water quality management plans.

The Gonzales SWCD will be offering technical and financial assistance for the implementation of water quality management plans. A WQMP is a site-specific plan to reduce nonpoint source pollution into surrounding surface waters from runoff due to agricultural and silvicultural activities in the area through land treatment practices, production practices and technologies.

Elm Creek, Sandies Creek and Peach Creek are listed on the State of Texas 2000 Clean Water Act Section 303(d) List as nonpoint

source pollution concerns for low dissolved oxygen and bacteria levels that exceed the criterion established. With this assistance, local producers should be able to implement a WQMP to help raise dissolved oxygen concentrations in the watershed while coming into compliance with the new requirements for poultry producers.

Technicians hired by the Gonzales SWCD are Linda Rathmann and Ted Reiley. The technicians will assist in the development and implementation of approximately 150 WQMPs throughout the district. WQMPs will address such issues as litter utilization, mortality disposal and soil testing.

For more information about available assistance in the Gonzales area, contact Rathmann or Reiley at the Gonzales County Soil and Water Conservation District at 672-8371, ext. 3, or fax 672-5654.

GONZALES COUNTY SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT #338

920 St. Joseph St., Room 142
Gonzales, Texas 78629



(830) 672-8371 ext. 3
(830) 672-5654 - fax

January 14, 2004

TO:

FROM: Ted Reiley & Shari Johnson, Planners

RE: Expired Soil & Litter Analysis

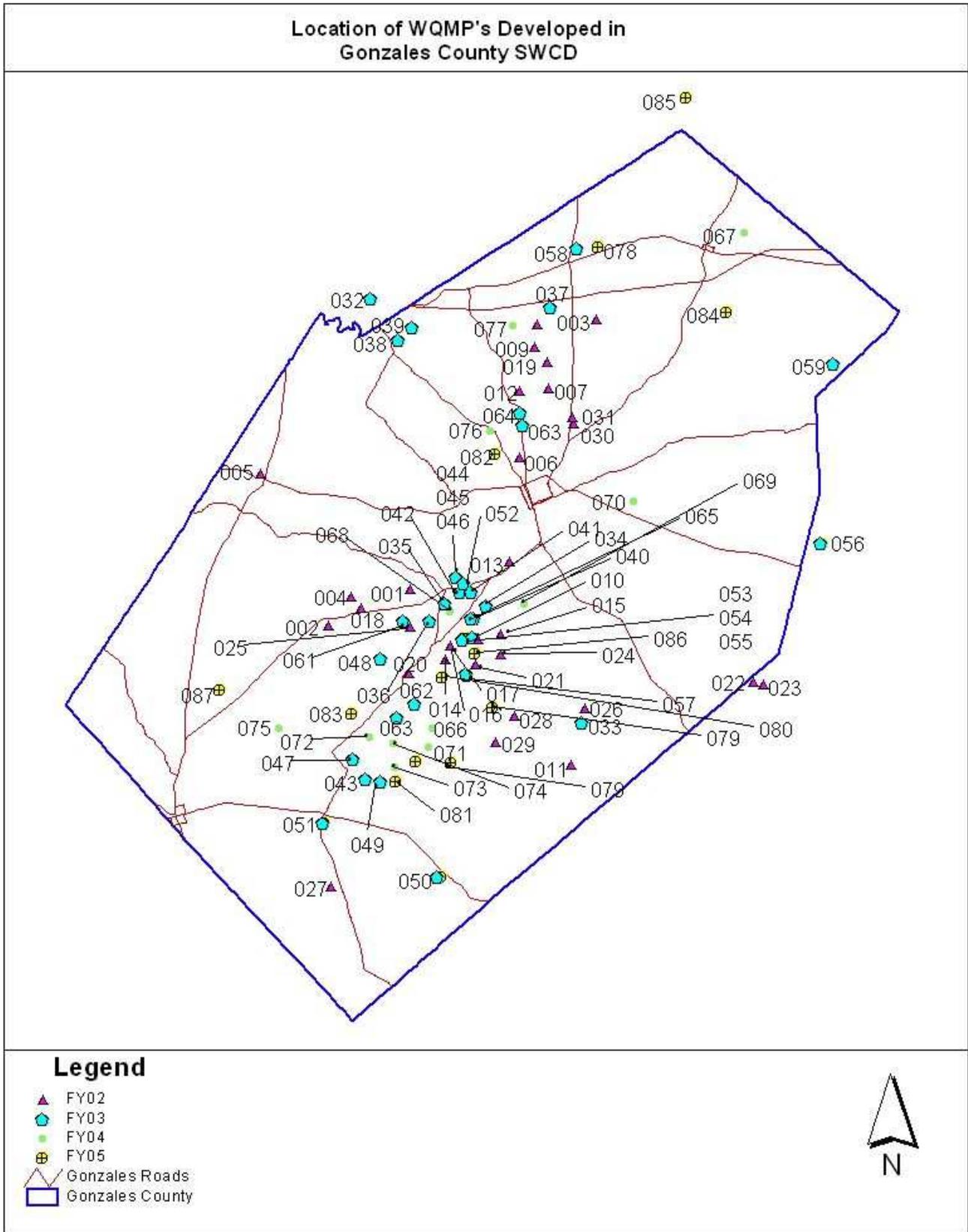
The Gonzales County Soil and Water Conservation District is currently offering **free** soil and litter analysis. However, this program is about to end and funds will no longer be available for assistance.

It is also time for you to update your Water Quality Management Plan with current samples as they have expired or will expire this year.

Please, take advantage of this opportunity before it's too late. Bring your soil and litter samples by our office for free analysis and prevent your WQMP from becoming out of compliance with the State Soil and Water Conservation Board. Call or come by our office with questions or for additional information.

Thank you for your prompt response.

SUBTASK 2.3 – BMP MAP



Poultry Growers Workshop

You're invited to attend an informal and **FREE** dinner meeting. This important meeting has been organized to provide current information on regulations and options affecting your litter management. The sponsors are providing dinner and a door prize, but **YOU** must register by **FRIDAY, MARCH 23rd** to attend.



Where:

American Legion Hall
Gonzales, Texas
Thursday, March 29
6:30 – 9:20 PM

Agenda

6:30—6:45	Welcome and Introductions	James Grimm
6:45—7:45	Dinner (catered by Alley's BBQ)	
7:45—8:05	State/Federal Rules for Litter and Mortality	John Carey
8:05—8:30	Texas Water Quality Management Plans	Mark Walker
8:30—8:50	Poultry Litter Hotline & Off-Farm Options	Jim Wimberly
8:50—9:10	Nuisance Odor & Dust Issues	Saqib Mukhtar
9:10—9:20	Concluding Remarks and Door Prizes	James Grimm

Three convenient ways to register! See reverse for details. Registration deadline is March 23, 2001.



POULTRY GROWERS WORKSHOP

You're invited to participate in an informal workshop designed for poultry growers in Gonzales County.

The format for the evening will include a FREE dinner along with informative speakers and materials and the chance to win one of several great door prizes.

Small groups will be formed to accommodate hands-on training and encourage interaction from all the participants.

American Legion Hall
Gonzales, Texas

Tuesday, October 29th
6:30-9:30 p.m.

AGENDA

6:30

Welcome and Introductions
James Grimm

6:45 – 7:45

Dinner catered by Dick Goss & Family BBQ
James Grimm – Door Prizes

7:45 – 9:20

Six 15 minute small group sessions

Manure Spreader Calibration & Litter Testing
Dwight Sexton – Linda Rathmann

Status Reviews & Plan Management
Stephen Deiss – Wain Fairchild

Mortality Management, Topography & Filter Strips
Judy Albus – Robbie Davis

Poultry Rules & Laws
Jay Bragg – John Foster

Soil Types & Testing
Janice Barnes – Shari Johnson

Composters & Stacksheds
Ace Fairchild – Ted Reiley

9:20 – 9:30

Closing Remarks
Mark Walker

COST SHARE PROGRAM

RECORD of COST-SHARE APPLICATIONS

Producer	Practice Requested		Cost-Share Approved	Cost-Share Earned	Balance
					\$ 80,812.00
001	316 / 642	Water Well / Incinerator	6,550.00	6,550.00	74,262.00
002	317	Composter	10,000.00	-	74,262.00
003	312	Stack Shed	10,000.00	-	74,262.00
004	312	Stack Shed	0.00	-	74,262.00
005	312 / 313	Stack Shed	10,000.00	10,000.00	64,262.00
006	312	Stack Shed	10,000.00	10,000.00	54,262.00
007	312	Stack Shed	10,000.00	10,000.00	44,262.00
008	312	Stack Shed	10,000.00	10,000.00	34,262.00
009	316	Incinerator	4,300.00	2,509.60	31,752.40
010	314 / 512	Brush Mgmt / Pasture Planting	0.00	-	31,752.40
011	314 / 512	Brush Mgmt / Pasture Planting	10,000.00	10,000.00	21,752.40
Totals			\$ 80,850.00	\$ 59,009.60	\$ 21,752.40

IMPLEMENTED COST-SHARE PROJECTS

Producer	(316) Incinerators (no.)	(312/ 313) Stack Sheds (no.)	(642) Water Well (no.)	(314) Brush Management (ac.)	(512) Pasture & Hayland Planting (ac.)
001	1		1		
005		1			
006		1			
007		1			
008		1			
009	1				
011				118	20
Totals	2 no.	4 no.	1 no.	118 ac.	20 ac.

PHOTOGRAPHS of IMPLEMENTED PROJECTS

Dry Litter Stack Shed (313)



Stack Sheds are an efficient way to safely store litter until the producer is ready to land apply it or sell to another.

**Combination Stack Shed (313)
with Composter (317)**



Composters are a sanitary and environmentally friendly way to dispose of daily mortality.

Incinerators (316)



Incinerators are another option for mortality disposal. They offer a quick and clean alternative.

