



Successfully Managing Nitrogen for 2016 Crops Starts Now

As harvest winds down, attention shifts to fall tillage and fertilizer applications. Nitrogen practices are of special significance as farmers seek to reduce both environmental and economic risk. Applying too much nitrogen wastes money and can contribute to water quality concerns, while applying too little can result in diminished crop yields. Research has also shown that there are relationships between rate, timing, form and placement of nitrogen fertilizers, and that these relationships vary across different climate regimes and soils. In short, best nitrogen practices for you may be different from farmers across the county, and in fact they may vary across your fields.

The University of Minnesota has available a summary of best management practices for nitrogen use in various regions and crops. Much of this information is well-known to most farmers and agronomy professionals and feedback such as that in our Green Star Farms (www.greenstarfarms.org) assessment program indicates that best nitrogen management practices are being applied to most cropland in Minnesota, yet perceptions persist that excess applications or poorly timed applications are significant contributors to environmental problems. To help insure that you aren't adding to or reinforcing these negative perceptions, here is a reminder of the basic do's and don'ts.

- Do not apply nitrogen fertilizer in the fall to coarse textured soils susceptible to leaching, or to very poorly drained soils.
- Where fall applications are acceptable, do wait to apply nitrogen fertilizers until soil temperatures at 6 inch depth are below 50° F.
- Do use a proven nitrification inhibitor to prevent conversion of nitrogen to the nitrate form, which can move with water.
- Do not apply nitrogen fertilizer on frozen soils.
- Do not apply nitrogen sources containing nitrate in the fall.

For more information on nitrogen best practices, visit with your agronomist or go to:

<http://www.extension.umn.edu/agriculture/nutrient-management/nitrogen/>

Farm Organizations Applaud Court of Appeals Decision to Halt EPA/COE Water Rule

Several farm organizations issued statements applauding the decision announced on Friday, October 9 by the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit, which issued a temporary stay of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (the Corps) "Waters of the U.S." (WOTUS) rule nationwide.

As a result, the new WOTUS rule cannot be enforced by the Corps or EPA. The stay will remain in effect until that court rules on whether it has jurisdiction to hear the case.

In a related matter, the US Judicial Panel on Multidistrict Litigation has denied the EPA's petition to consolidate the numerous lawsuits filed over the proposed water quality rule.

Minnesota River Congress to Meet in New Ulm

The new, citizen-led organization being formed to promote the natural resource and economic health of the Minnesota River Basin will meet Thursday, November 12. This fifth meeting of the full Congress is scheduled to begin with a networking fair at 4 p.m. at Turner Hall in New Ulm.

Register by sending your name and address, and \$15 registration fee (includes meal) to Minnesota River Congress, PO Box 488 New Ulm, MN 56073. Online registration is available at:

<https://payableform.appspot.com/forms/avm4p>.

The meeting will include formation of a governing action board composed of representatives from each of the basin's 13 separate watersheds, various sectors such as business and agriculture, and state agencies. The action board will set policy, goals, and objectives for the Congress.

The Congress will conclude with a discussion of proposed legislation (Senate File 2204) creating a Minnesota River Commission. The commission would coordinate water quality work among the 13 watersheds in the basin. The current bill cites the Minnesota River Congress as serving as the citizen advisory committee and also having access to commission voting membership.

A meal will be served at 6 p.m., followed by two brief presentations, a Wild River Academy report on the Paddle Forward excursion this past summer and fall down the entire 318-mile length of the Minnesota River, and an overview of Minnesota Agricultural Water Resources Center the Discovery Farms water quality research project.

The Congress business meeting is scheduled to begin at 7:15 p.m. with the following topics:

- Overview of the past 25 years of the Minnesota River conservation movement, and recent Congress activity.
- Roles and responsibilities of the action board and management committee.
- Survey of individuals to identify specific areas or topics of interest in the basin.
- Nominate and select members of the action governing board.

SPECIAL NOTE: Farmers are encouraged to attend to provide their input on this new organization and its proposed funding mechanisms.

Nutrient Management/Nitrogen Management Conferences Scheduled

Mark your calendars for the 8th Annual Nutrient Management Conference, which will be held on February 9, 2016 at Jackpot Junction near Morton. The Second Annual Nitrogen Management Conference will be held on February 16, 2016 at the International Event Center in Rochester. Watch for more information programs and registration in the coming weeks. Both events will be hosted by the MAWRC along with the Minnesota Department of Agriculture, University of Minnesota and other sponsors.

The MAWRC is a non-profit research and education corporation comprised of 24 agricultural organizations working together to address water issues. For more information, go to www.mawrc.org.

