

MAWRC Monthly

- January 2016



Nutrient Management Conferences to Address Farm Profitability and Water Quality Concerns

The MAWRC will host two conferences in 2016, featuring presentations on nitrogen and phosphorus fertilization, nitrates in wells, cover crops and advanced nutrient technologies. These conferences address both economic and environmental issues, highlighting current research of interest to all agriculturalists.

Several of the presentations involve research funded by the Agricultural Fertilizer Research and Education Council (AFREC), an industry-funded effort to improve nutrient use efficiency, an important factor in water quality protection. Learn more about AFREC at <http://www.mda.state.mn.us/chemicals/fertilizers/afrec.aspx>.

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 23, 2016 at the International Event Center in Rochester. Both events will be hosted by the MAWRC, along with the Minnesota Department of Agriculture, University of Minnesota Extension, and with the support of numerous sponsors.

To view the program agendas or to register for either conference, go to <http://mawrc.org/events.html>. The cost for each event is \$20, which can be paid on line at the time of registration or at the door.

Governor's Water Summit February 27 in St. Paul

Last week Governor Dayton announced that his water summit will be held in St. Paul on Saturday, February 27. There is no cost to attend, but registration is required, and online registrations closed within a few days as capacity was reached. Approximately 1000 are expected to attend. Registrations are still being accepted for a waiting list. Minnesotans are also invited to participate in an on-line survey to weigh in on water quality challenges and solutions. Find more information about the summit, including registration information and the on-line survey here- <http://mn.gov/governor/newsroom/pressreleasedetail.jsp?id=102-177502>.

In announcing the summit, the governor also proposed a \$220 million bonding package, with \$50 million earmarked for buffer implementation and nearly \$170 million to begin upgrading aging pipes and sewage treatment plants all across the state. According to the MPCA, failing pipes are a growing problem in many Minnesota cities, with an estimated \$4.2 billion needed in the near future. The US EPA estimates that more than \$11 billion will be needed during the next 20 years to maintain and upgrade water systems in Minnesota.

I'm curious to know how many farmers and farm organization representatives plan to attend the Governor's Summit. Email me at warren@mawrc.org to let me know if you are attending, are on the wait list, or have completed the survey.

2016 Extension Drainage Design Workshops Announced

The annual Extension Drainage Design Workshops will be held in Wahpeton, ND January 26 – 27, and Marshall, MN, February 17 – 18. The workshops are a collaborative effort between the University of Minnesota, and North Dakota State University Extension. The 2-day workshops start at 8:00 a.m. and end at 5:00 p.m. on day two.

The workshops will focus on planning and design of agricultural drainage tile systems to meet both profitability and environmental objectives. Registration is \$250, with each workshop limited to 55 participants. To learn more, go to:

<http://blog-crop-news.extension.umn.edu/2016/01/2016-extension-drainage-design-workshops.html> .

University of Minnesota Extension Publication Highlights N Management in Corn/Alfalfa Rotation

A new publication from U of M Extension serves as a reminder of the importance of taking nitrogen and manure credits when rotating from alfalfa to corn. A survey of 421 Minnesota farmers shows that only 35% of respondents followed Extension guidelines for N credits for first-year corn following alfalfa. The survey also found that only 29% followed Extension N rate guidelines for second-year corn. Adoption of Extension N guidelines slipped slightly when manure was applied, from 35 to 30% and from 29 to 25% for first- and second-year corn respectively.

The report, authored by Matt Yost, Jeffrey Coulter and Michael Russelle, shows that opportunities exist for growers to improve profits by further crediting N from alfalfa and manure. The research and publication were partially funded by AFREC and the Minnesota Corn Research & Promotion Council.

You can find the full report at

<http://www.extension.umn.edu/agriculture/corn/cropping-systems/managing-rotation-from-alfalfa-to-corn/> .

Comments Due January 29 on MDA Nitrogen Rule

The Minnesota Department of Agriculture is accepting comments on its proposed nitrogen fertilizer rule, which will likely prohibit fall and winter applications of commercial nitrogen fertilizers in areas where groundwater is vulnerable to contamination due to rapid water infiltration, specifically coarse textured sandy soils and in the karst region of southeast Minnesota. Learn more at

<http://www.mda.state.mn.us/chemicals/fertilizers/nutrient-mgmt/nitrogenplan/mitigation/wrpr.aspx> .

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 .

