

Program Year 2021 Agricultural BMP TAC
Equine Workgroup Subcommittee-Pilot Project
4-16-19 Meeting Agenda
10:00 am – 3:00 pm
USDA Service Center
325 N. Madison Road, Suite B
Orange, VA

Attendees:

Amanda Pennington, DCR-Chair
David Bryon, DCR-non voting member
Anne Coates, Thomas Jefferson SWCD
Sharon Conner, Hanover Caroline SWCD
Kris Jarvis, John Marshall SWCD
Willie Woode, Northern Virginia SWCD
Jay Yankey, Price William SWCD

Subcommittee consists of 6 voting members, all members were present, therefore, subcommittee had quorum for this meeting.

NOTE-topics in bold are the items that are being recommended for full workgroup vote.

- The chair clarified what the process is with the group. This subcommittee will bring recommendations to the full Equine Workgroup, who will then vote to advance them to the full VACS Technical Advisory Committee (TAC). The recommendations will be assigned to TAC subcommittees who will discuss the recommendations and bring more specific recommendations to the full TAC, who will then vote to advance them to the Soil and Water Board.
- **Qualification Criteria**
 - Pilot program would target those operations that don't qualify for VACS
 - Large commercial operations that already qualify for VACS do not qualify for the pilot program.
 - If a commercial operation gets ranked out, they cannot come back and apply for pilot program.
 - District level decision as to whether they qualify for VACS or the pilot program.
 - District staff on the subcommittee feel it is critical to allow the Districts some flexibility to help them meet their WIP goals.
 - Participant could include a 5 acre hobby farm or a 100 acre farm with 20 pet horses. As long as it is not a training, boarding, breeding operation.
 - Similar to VCAP
 - Resource concern must exist.
 - VOTE-the subcommittee voted on the above criteria for qualification and it passed with a unanimous vote.

- VACS doesn't always have what the large operations need, like manure composting.
 - Make suggestions to TAC
 - Animal Waste Subcommittee
- **General framework for financial assistance, such as how many districts can participate, how do we choose who participates, how is the funding distributed, etc.**
 - One suggestion, if the pilot program is funded, select districts who could provide matching funds
 - Further discussion decided that we should not disqualify Districts from participation simply because they don't have funding to provide a match.
 - Could base it on need, experience, etc.
 - To start, we could gauge District interest by sending out a survey, rather than pick Districts to participate. This may prove to be self-limiting in that there may only be a handful of District that would want to participate. The survey would ask if a District is interested in participating in the program, what their experience is, and if they are willing to share their experiences.
 - Subcommittee agrees this is the best place to start.
 - Subcommittee consensus is that the funds should be distributed similar to VACS rather than VCAP which ranks other district projects against each other. Have a central pot of money and the districts would apply for the funding. But, unlike VCAP, everyone who applies gets some amount of funding. District applies for the amount that they want. Develop some type of formula to distribute the funding.
 - Should form a committee, maybe cross reference this committee with the folks looking at the new cost share allocations. Keep it consistent and defensible.
- Question was asked, what about folks like the state fair who don't qualify for VACS but have a need for manure composting.
 - Not under this program.
- **This should include Districts statewide, though all specifications that are used need to be eligible for credit in the bay model.**
- **General specification recommendations**
 - **Manure management**
 - Composting
 - Should be properly composted before it is applied to fields.
 - Also needs to be properly composted before it can be sold to others for applications.
 - Composting can be considered part of the storage system as well.
 - Handling and storage
 - Appropriate land application
 - Nutrient Management Plans (NMP) requirement if applying on the farm.
 - Animal Waste Management System (AWMS) plan requirement
 - **Loafing lot management**
 - Roof runoff management (drip edges, gutters)
 - Sacrifice lot
 - Rotational paddocks/pasture use
 - Smaller version of the dairy loafing lot system

- Simple heavy use area
 - Hardened pad, could be considered full confinement
 - Need to consider both the volume of water as well as nutrient runoff.
 - Possibly more permeable surfaces
 - **Stream exclusion**
 - Buffers
 - Fencing
 - Alternative watering systems
 - Similar to current SL-6
 - Potential maximum stocking rates requirement if utilizing rotational grazing and getting payment on temporary and/or permanent cross fence.
 - **Pasture management**
 - Rotation grazing plan-pasture management plan
 - Maximum stocking rates required
 - Seasonal grasses optional
 - Temporary cross fence
 - Over seeding to re-establish
 - No watering source
 - **Heavy use areas, travel lanes, gateways, pads around rubermaids, etc. to stabilize areas.**
 - Basically a stabilization practice as a catch all
- Stocking rates
 - Rotational grazing plan will handle stocking rates if they want grass lots as part of the loafing lot management system, but make maximum stocking rates required for the pasture management/rotational grazing practices
 - Not for eligibility for the program, but eligibility for applicable specifications, such as pasture management
- Increasing steps. Start simple, see how folks do, get a feel for if they want more things like rain gardens.
- **Education**
 - Healthy Land for Healthy Horses may be a good guide
 - Train the trainer type thing
 - The Districts would be trained on how to train their participants in operation and maintenance of the practices.
 - District staff does the training of the participants
 - Training for management, etc. maintenance
 - Trainings should focus on one topic at a time
 - Piggyback on trainings that are already being done, just tack on some time for horses focus
 - Example-we could add engineering specific to horse practices at our normal engineering trainings.
 - Operation, maintenance and resources
 - Develop training materials
- **All of the practices should include caps.**

- First TAC meeting of PY2021-July 9, 2019
- Set next meeting-not set

Pilot Program Subcommittee Recommendations Needing Workgroup Vote

- Qualification Criteria
- General Framework for Financial Assistance
- Statewide Program, but all specifications must qualify for credit in the bay model
- General Specification Recommendations
 - Manure Management
 - Loafing Lot Management
 - Stream Exclusion
 - Pasture Management
 - Heavy Use Areas, travel lanes, etc. (stabilization practice)
- Education
- Must include caps