



The California Dairy Quality Assurance Program (CDQAP) is an industry, government, and academic partnership whose mission is to encourage science-based dairying practices that promote the health of the consumer, the environment and dairy livestock.

CDQAP among dairy groups recognized for compliance assistance

On January 19, 2012, the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (Water Board) adopted comprehensive water quality regulations for dairies. Since that time, CDQAP and a host of other organizations have actively assisted the region's dairy farmers to help them understand and comply with these new regulations.

To recognize the efforts of CDQAP and others, the Water Board adopted an official Resolution of Appreciation (R1-2013-0026) on May 2, 2013. This unprecedented action acknowledged the hard work of the California dairy community to help dairy farmers comply with the water quality requirements.



North Coast dairy producers attend 1 of 12 water quality workshops conducted by CDQAP since April 2012.

CDQAP, along with the Natural Resource Conservation Service, local Resource Conservation Districts, Western United Dairymen and Water Board staff, conducted educational workshops similar to other CDQAP workshops held in the Central Valley for water and air quality rules. These "one-stop-shopping" events helped dairy farmers navigate the new regulatory process.

The latest round of workshops, completed in mid-October, focused on compliance with surface and ground-water monitoring requirements, and completion of the first-year annual report.

CDQAP workshop attendance by dairy farmers has been strong. By stepping up to the plate to attend classes, complete Water Quality Plans and implement monitoring on their farms, dairy farmers have demonstrated their commitment to remaining strong environmental stewards of the North Coast. In addition, local dairy groups have formed group monitoring associations and programs to comply with surface water monitoring requirements.

As progress continues, CDQAP will continue to support dairy farmers in meeting these new water quality objectives.

Tips for minimizing and managing mud

By Michael Payne, DVM, Ph.D

With winter storms (and hopefully above average rainfall) approaching, producers may be reminded of some muddy areas they've had challenges with in previous years. Mud in dairy corrals can depress feed intake, reduce feed efficiency and contribute to slug-feeding, acidosis, displaced abomasums, lameness and mastitis.

Dairy studies estimate that every inch of mud reduces Dry Matter Intake by 2.5 percent. Studies in beef feedlot cattle suggest that hock deep mud can reduce feed intake by up to 30 percent. University of California research reveals that cows limited to muddy areas also spend far less time lying down, even preferring to lie on concrete rather than in muddy areas.

Corrals can be managed to prevent mud, but *correcting* mud problems can be difficult, if not impossible, once the soil has been saturated by rain. Important corral management techniques include: diversion of water entering the corral, providing drainage for rain water, sloping corral surfaces and creation of loafing mounds. Because manure greatly increases the water holding capacity of soil, light, but regular, scraping throughout the year is essential.

(See "Mud" on page 2)

Nutrient management reminders prior to the rainy months

By Deanne Meyer, Ph.D

Temperatures are dropping and fall is in the air. 'Tis the season to go through your "winterize my dairy" checklist.

- ◆ Review your nutrient management plan to be sure you've taken all required samples.
Don't forget soil sampling for those in the Central Valley – sample 20 percent of fields every year beginning in 2013.
- ◆ Obtain copies of all crop yields (by field) for recently harvested crops.
- ◆ Save copies of laboratory analyses from all samples taken in 2013.

(See "Nutrient" on page 2)

...Mud (from page 1)

Another method of preventing mud is to use fly (flue) ash, or a blend of fly ash and bottom ash, to stabilize the corral surface or lanes of high animal traffic. Fly ash is the combustion product of industrial incinerators, consisting of the fine particles that rise with the flue gases in contrast to the falling “bottom ash.” Between one-third and one-half of the combustion ash produced in the U.S. is recycled, often for the production of cinder blocks, cement or to stabilize soil during road construction.

A unique feature of fly ash is its “pozzolanic reaction” with calcium in soil, setting up a mixture similar to concrete and greatly stabilizing the surface and minimizing mud. Fly ash should be sourced from incinerators using only organic material (coal, prunings or untreated non-painted lumber) to avoid contaminants like heavy metals. When properly applied and compacted, fly ash is an environmentally safe tool for reducing mud on dairies.

To learn more about minimizing the health and economic effects of mud on your herd, visit the *CDQAP Ruminations* page at www.CDQA.org.

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...Nutrient (from page 1)

- ◆ Input data for calendar year 2013.
- ◆ Maintain production area evaluation documentation (weekly from October through April).
- ◆ Take required pond photos (include pond markers in photo if you dairy in Central Valley).
- ◆ Remove solid manure from corrals and groom corrals so rain will runoff to collection location and not create standing water in corrals.
- ◆ Cover piled manure that will remain during the rainy season (to meet Air District rules, remember to keep wet things wet and dry things dry and under cover).
- ◆ Clean gutters and install gutter extensions to divert clean water from storage ponds.
- ◆ Evaluate production area to be sure water will drain where it needs to during rain events.
- ◆ Apply nutrients to crop lands to meet targeted application rates.
- ◆ Double check to be sure your storm water sample collection kit is current.
- ◆ Evaluate fields after preparation for, and planting of, winter crops to minimize soil erosion.

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CDQAP Partners:

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