EQIP: Environmental Quality Incentive Program
Cost-Share Sign-up Deadline is January 13th

January 13th is the final day to sign up for 2006 EQIP funds. EQIP is the federal incentive program that provides agricultural and forestry producers with financial (cost-share) assistance to implement practices beneficial to the environment. Last year in Whatcom County 15 producers were awarded EQIP contracts worth nearly 1.1 million dollars. While most of last year’s contract recipients were dairy producers, the group also included berry, beef and forestry producers. EQIP funds are largely directed at practices that will improve the quality and quantity of local water, but practices benefiting soil, air, wildlife and livestock also received financial support.

Whatcom County EQIP applicants must compete for funds with producers from four other northwest Washington counties. A Local Working Group developed the criteria by which each producer’s application is ranked. The ranking process is intended to determine which application will produce the most environmental benefits. One new feature of this year’s program is that forestry producers will have their own pool of funds (approximately 20% of the total) and will not be competing directly with livestock and crop producers. For more information or to submit an application, please contact the USDA Agricultural Service Center.

EQIP cost-share could have been used to help fund at least four of the practices shown here (pit, pump, separator, drystack).

Liquid Manure Application Method Influences Fate of Ammonia

Ammonia generally accounts for about half the nitrogen in liquid dairy manure. But whether this nitrogen eventually ends up in the crop (as a nutrient), or in the air (as a potential pollutant) depends a lot on how manure is applied. Extensive research (particularly in Denmark) has improved our understanding about whether ammonia is likely to be used or lost, even after a number of different environmental conditions are factored in, such as air temperature, wind speed, soil moisture, slurry type and slurry dry matter content. An easy-to-access and easy-to-use program on Environment Canada’s website “farmwest.com” (look under Climate on the home page) now enables producers to predict the ammonia losses they might expect after providing information about 10 different factors relating to an application. The table below: Ammonia Loss from Applied Slurry Manure illustrates the wide variation in ammonia losses predicted by changing application method. The take home lesson from the table is: In order to make the best use of ammonia in manure, choose surface banding or injection as an application method.

Table: Ammonia Loss from Applied Slurry Manure

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Application Method</th>
<th>% Total Ammonia N Loss</th>
<th>Loss – lb N/Ac</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Broadcast spread</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>35 #</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surface band</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>20 #</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shallow injection</td>
<td>26 %</td>
<td>19 #</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deep injection</td>
<td>13 %</td>
<td>9.5 #</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Weather conditions: Temp. 75 F; wind speed 7 MPH
Nutrient analysis: 8.3 #/1000 gal NH3
Volume applied: 9,000 gal./ac

We’ll all miss Bill’s smiling face and good advice!

OPEN HOUSE - BILL BONSEN RETIRES - OPEN HOUSE

Bill Bonsen retires on January 3rd after providing 47 years of dedicated service to the agricultural industry! You’re invited to stop by the Ag Service Center and wish him well before he leaves. Refreshments will be served.

Date: January 3, 2006
Time: 1 – 4 PM
Place: Agricultural Service Center – 6975 Hannegan Road

Manure Injection is an application method that makes the best use of ammonia in manure, while minimizing ammonia loss to the air.

Don’t forget to vote!
District Board of Supervisors election March 7th.

Our Mission Statement: The Whatcom Conservation District promotes conservation education and provides technical assistance to foster a healthy relationship between the environment and people.
Two Reasons Cited for Rise in Beaver Population

Whatcom County’s beaver population is definitely on the rise and so are complaints about flooding and impeded drainage caused by their dams. The following two factors are cited as the main causes for why they have increased:

- Market conditions changed: In the late 1980s the international fur market crashed. Before then trappers competed for trapping areas and kept populations at historic low levels dating back to the 1960s. Commercial trapping quickly became insignificant, leaving only nuisance trapping to control populations.

- Laws changed: In 2000 voters in Washington State passed Initiative 713 which placed limits on the use of body-gripping traps, and also made it illegal to buy, sell or trade mammals or raw furs of mammals taken in Washington with body-gripping traps. In the 10 years prior to the passage of Initiative 713 a yearly average of nearly 5,300 beavers were trapped. In the first 3 years following Initiative 713 the annual average dropped to just over 1000.