



The AGRI-VATOR

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“Culture of Compliance”

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As you may well know, inspections of agriculture operations started sometime around late summer or early fall of 2016. Since the mid 80's, the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) has been funding Conservation Districts (Districts) through the Chesapeake Bay Program (CBP). This program has funded salary, benefits, administration and equipment for Districts to assist their county agriculture operators to develop conservation plans and manure management plans (MMP). The Bay staff also designs and implements Best Management Practices (BMP), usually under the supervision of the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). Sometime during the fall of 2015 or earlier, Governor Wolf's administration started to develop their “Culture of Compliance” strategy concerning agriculture and its requirements to operate, namely Agriculture Erosion & Sediment Control plans (Ag E&S plans) as required under Chapter 102.4 (a) and MMP as required under Chapter 91.36(b). These requirements are not new. Ag E&S plans were required starting 1972 and the MMP were required starting sometime in the 70's.

In the 2016-17 CBP agreement, DEP required Districts to perform 50 inspections per paid Bay position. Since Lancaster District has 6 paid positions, Lancaster is required to perform 300 inspections. Some Districts did not want to do these Compliance Inspections, so they did not renew their CBP agreements and dropped out of the program, forgoing the funds that came along with the CBP agreement. Agriculture operations in counties who's District dropped out of the CBP will have or have been inspected by DEP staff.

The first round of inspections will concentrate on operations that the District has no record of both plans. Letters are sent out to the owners of the properties that have been chosen to be inspected notifying them of the impending



inspection and inviting them to set up appointments at their convenience. An inspection is a paper work review to document compliance. Compliance at this point is defined as you have the plans in your possession, that they reflect the current management and have all the required elements. The inspection will also document if records are being kept for the MMP, BMP's implemented without cost sharing, animal numbers and any active pollution events observed during the visit. At this time, DEP has not charged the District to walk the farm. Inspectors are required to follow minimum bio-security measures.

If owners or operators do not have the required plans, it is documented in an Inspection Report and given 90 days to have plans developed and submitted to the District. If plans are not developed within the timeframe, these cases will be forwarded to DEP for their consideration. DEP will send a Notice of Violation (NOV) and provide 90 days to develop and submit plans. If plans are not submitted to DEP within that timeframe, DEP will issue a Field Order. At this point, it gets serious. If you or someone you know is at this point, it would be wise to comply or counsel them to comply with DEP's order. If at any point in this process, if you are sincerely attempting to get a plan, and your planner needs more time, have the planner contact the inspector or DEP and request additional time. If the requested extension is reasonable, you are more than likely to receive the additional time to complete your plan(s).

Only a fully implemented plan will reduce soil erosion to an acceptable level. Inspectors are there for the purpose of ensuring that at least every operation has the required plans. At some point inspectors will be charged by DEP to revisit these farms to document the level of implementation and to assure that these plans are fully implemented. For the agriculture community, if you do not have both plans, now is the time to get them. If you do have your plans, the time between now and the follow up inspection is your opportunity to implement those plans if you have not done so already.

Beef in the World, What's Going On?

— by Curtis McFadden

www.drovers.com/article/us-beef-exports-stay-red-hot-july



Looking from PA out into the world of exports most of us think, that doesn't concern me or, I'm not big enough to be part of that. All answers are wrong. Exports are something for all farmers and ranchers alike, big or small, to watch and consider what the current marketplace is looking like for his or her beef product. It's also a great tool to help understand pricing and possibly what the market place is doing at that time. All major beef companies are involved in exporting beef products and some medium to smaller size operations as well. Currently USA ranks 4th in the world for beef exports with our leading market being Japan. As of July 2017, exports for the USA are increasing hand over fist. July beef exports totaled 104,488 metric tons (mt), up five percent year-over-year, while export value reached \$623.7 million – up 18 percent from a year ago

and the highest since December 2014. For January through July, exports

increased 11 percent in volume and 15 percent in value (\$3.97 billion) compared to the first seven months of last year. Exports accounted for 13.2 percent of total U.S. beef production in July and 10.7 percent for muscle cuts only. These were the highest ratios of 2017, but down from 14.2 percent and 11 percent, respectively, last July. For January through July, beef exports accounted for 12.8 percent of total production and 10 percent for muscle cuts – roughly steady with last year (USMEF's [statistics web page](#)). So, looking at all that, currently exports are on the rise for the US. The US continues to fight for its spot and looking to grow more into the export market. New opportunities, like the China market and NAFTA negotiations, are in the works but not a lot of definitive details are being released as of right now.



Nutritionists

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Safety Tip: During the harvest season be aware of surroundings and turn off equipment before working on it.