

# Conference Addresses Manure Storage, Management, Regulations And More

URBANA, ILL.

**M**onitoring manure storage capacity and current livestock regulations are just two of the topics that will be addressed at the 2009 Livestock Manure Management Conference workshops, sponsored by the University of Illinois and set for March in Effingham and Princeton, Illinois.

"Inspecting manure storage structures to make sure they're in good shape needs to be an ongoing thing," said Randy Fonner, Extension specialist and one of the coordinators of the conference. "Maybe you need to replace a valve, maybe there's been some rodent burrowing. Preventive inspections can catch something before it becomes a problem. Then you have time to order a part, or bring in equipment that you need to fix it. You fix it on your time, when you want to, and not when you should be out harvesting crops."

Because 2008 was a wet year, weather-related manure releases have been a concern, said Fonner. "We heard a lot of discussion about storages that were 'fuller than full,'" he said. "The added pressure [of a significant rainfall] can cause a real problem, especially if you weren't keeping up with your inspections and the integrity of your storage wasn't great before."

Fonner said whether you have an earthen storage, an above-ground concrete storage or a lagoon, some type of depth gauge in the storage is crucial.

"A depth indicator in the storage can tell you when to start (and stop) pumping it down," he noted. "If the storage is almost full, and you know there's rain coming up from the Gulf in the next week, draw it down. If you can't apply it to your field, maybe there's a neighbor's field

you can get into. Think ahead and try to anticipate that. It's all about planning, as opposed to crisis management."

A panel has been set up to discuss manure storage capacity planning, and several producers will talk about how they dealt with rainfall and full storages.

Fonner said an update on livestock regulations will also be given, particularly as they relate to run-off from open lots.

"We're going to be talking about good manure management practices for keeping those lots clean," he said, "and how to prevent nutrients and any pathogens from reaching a roadside ditch, and potentially a stream or a creek."

Other topics that will be addressed at the workshops include current Farm Bill programs, the latest technology for manure management and precision farming, and a producer panel on manure marketing.

Each workshop will also host a trade show that features vendors who offer the latest in manure management equipment and services.

The manure management workshops will be held Tuesday, March 24, 2009 at the Knights of Columbus Hall in Effingham and Thursday, March 26, 2009 at the Wise Guys Bar & Grill in Princeton. The workshop costs \$40, with registration beginning at 8:15 a.m. and the first session starting at 9:00 a.m. Lunch will be provided and the workshops adjourn at 4:00 p.m.

Because lunch is included, pre-registration is necessary. To register, call ACES Marketing and Distribution at 1-800-345-6087 before March 18 to guarantee your space. You may access the conference brochure at <http://www.livestock-trail.uiuc.edu/manure/>. Δ