

IMPACT

 University of Idaho
Cooperative
Extension System

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CAFO Classes Educate Cattle Producers

The Situation

In the early 1970's, the Clean Water Act was passed into law. The law's purpose was to protect the waters of the United States by preventing water pollution. Agriculture was pretty much ignored until the last two years. The EPA has now started to enforce the law on cattle producers that have a confined animal feeding operation, (CAFO).

A large percentage of cattle producers in North Central Idaho are impacted greatly by the regulations because of the proximity of their winter-feeding grounds to creeks, streams and rivers. This created a need to provide education on the rules and regulations of the Clean Water Act, CAFO's and AFO's and what management changes are needed to stay in compliance.

Our Response

To address the need for education on CAFO's and the Clean Water Act, six classes and tours were sponsored and conducted by the University of Idaho in cooperation with the Idaho Cattle Association, and the State Department of Agriculture. Two classes were held in Grangeville, one class was held in Lewiston and one class was held in Kendrick. A tour was also held for cattle producers in the Lenore area and a tour for University of Idaho and Washington State University beef production class students was conducted in Fenn.

Program Outcomes

Over 275 beef producers from the North Central Idaho Area attended the classes and tours. Cattle producers attending the classes and tours learned how to determine if their operation qualified as a CAFO. They also learned management practice options that were available for adoption to keep them in compliance.

At the classes and workshops producers were introduced to Idaho Department of Agriculture engineers and were given the opportunity to have the engineers visit their ranches to conduct an on site evaluation and help develop plans for redesigning pens to insure that the ranchers were meeting the requirements of the law. Approximately 20 ranchers took advantage of this program and obtained help in fixing water quality problem areas on their ranch.

For More Information

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