The recent expansion of pork production in Alabama has brought about several issues relating to pork production and the environment. Questions concerning regulations, producer qualification, water quality and odor are being asked by pork producers and concerned citizens.

Pork production farms in Alabama are required to meet the environmental regulation of the Alabama Department of Environmental Management. The Natural Resources Conservation Service provides the technical standards required for swine waste management plans. Pork producer education, as well as training for Extension and other professionals, are provided by the Alabama Cooperative Extension System on production and environmental issues.

Current Regulations

- Alabama regulations prohibit livestock waste from entering the waters of the state (ground and surface water), either from direct discharge or run-off. Violators are subject to daily fines up to $25,000, as well as the cost of repairs and cleanup.
- NPDES Construction Site Permits are required for a swine facility that will disturb 5 acres or more of land during construction and/or renovation.

Certification

- Environmental Assurance training is available for agricultural professionals/educators.
- Producer certification is available through the Alabama Cooperative Extension System using the Environmental Assurance Program.

Water Quality

- Waste management plans developed by professional engineers to meet or exceed NRCS technical standards and approved by NRCS do not allow for contamination of surface or ground water.
- Contamination of water from discharge and/or run-off from a swine facility is an illegal activity subject to fines and clean-up.
- Manure can only be applied to land following the best management practices (BMPs) in the nutrient management portion of a waste management plan. Land application rate is determined by the nutrient concentration of waste water and the crop to be grown.
Set-backs

- Recommended NRCS set-back for waste storage facilities in Alabama is 700ft from occupied, non-owned dwellings.
- Actual set-backs are determined by terrain, ground cover, vegetative filters, and animal concentration (most are 1000 to 2500 ft from dwellings, churches, etc.)

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