

# **Animal Feeding Operations (AFOs) and the Environment**

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The problem addressed is the emerging issue of livestock manure and the environmental/health concerns associated with animal feeding operations. The concern is that animal agriculture has been identified as a nonpoint source pollutant contributor in many watersheds across the nation.

The recently released USDA/EPA Unified National Strategy for Animal Feeding Operations (AFOs) set a national expectation that all AFO owners and operators will have planned and be implementing Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plans (CNMPs) by the year 2009. NRCS workload analysis developed by the states

indicates that about 300,000 AFOs will need assistance to develop CNMPs. A significant number of the AFOs needing assistance are operated by limited-resource and historically underserved owners and operators. Small and limited-resource farmers often lack the financial resources needed to implement new technology. Coordinated research, technical innovation, compliance assistance, and technology transfer relative to AFOs are critically important if limited-resource and small farmers are expected to implement CNMPs.