

Best Management Farming Practices for Water Quality Protection Nutrient Management (590)

BMP: Protect creeks, streams and rivers from nutrient inputs.

NRCS Practice Standard: Nutrient Management (590)

A nutrient management plan addresses the nutrient needs of the crop and the water quality concerns of the watershed. To promote health and conserve input use, application method, timing, rate should be specified according to plant and site needs. The plan should also describe how nutrients will be kept on site and use by plants, and not influence water quality.



Nutrient Management (NRCS Conservation Practice Code 590)

Definition: Managing the amount, application rate, source, placement, application method, and timing of plant nutrients and soil amendments.

Purposes:

- To budget, supply, and conserve nutrients for plant production.
- To minimize agricultural nonpoint source pollution of surface and groundwater resources.
- To properly utilize manure or organic by-products as a plant nutrient source.
- To protect air quality by reducing odors, nitrogen emissions (ammonia, oxides of nitrogen), and the formation of atmospheric particulates.
- To maintain or improve the physical, chemical, and biological condition of soil.

Consider this:

Use no-till/strip-till with cover crops to sequester nutrients, increase soil organic matter, increase aggregate stability, reduce compaction, improve infiltration, and enhance soil biological activity to improve nutrient use efficiency.

Develop site-specific yield maps to diagnose low- and high- yield areas, or zones, and make the necessary management changes.

Use soil tests, plant tissue analyses, and field observations to check for secondary plant nutrient deficiencies or toxicity that may impact plant growth or nutrient availability.

Use conservation practices that slow runoff, reduce erosion, and increase infiltration, e.g., filter strip, contour farming, or contour buffer strips.

Use application methods and timing strategies that reduce the risk of nutrient transport by ground and surface waters.

Use high-efficiency irrigation technologies (e.g., reduced-pressure drop nozzles for center pivots) to reduce the potential for nutrient losses.

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