



clean water starts at home

# URI Small Acreage Livestock Education Program

Annual Program Summary  
September 2009 – August 2010

## Situation

Throughout Rhode Island (RI) and New England, small acreage livestock and horse owners often “slip through the cracks” for receiving education and assistance that encourages the adoption of livestock Best Management Practices (BMPs). Properties usually consist of small parcels in residential areas that are close to neighbors and water resources, especially private drinking water wells. Small acreage livestock owners often have different goals and resources compared to larger scale livestock operations. All these factors pose challenges for managing manure, livestock yards and pastures.

## Adoption-Outreach Education Program

The University of Rhode Island Cooperative Extension (URI CE) Home\*A\*Syst and 4-H Programs, and the URI Departments of Fisheries, Animal and Veterinary Science and Communication Studies, have developed and conducted a train-the-trainer education program for small acreage livestock owners. We have worked primarily with URI 4-H Program volunteers.

## Year Four Accomplishments (September 2009 – August 2010)

### **Project Video - Keeping Livestock: Protecting Water Resources and Health.**

Completed a 30 minute educational video (August 2010) to reach a larger segment of the RI population and increase awareness about livestock ownership, Program resources, and the need for appropriate BMPs.

- The video features interviews with three families involved with the URI 4-H Program and eight staff representing URI and partner agencies.
- The video will be aired on the local educational access TV station in RI (Cox 18) in various time slots for a total of 32 times over the course of the next year. The video will also be available through internet access. Continued outreach will be conducted with the target audience to announce the video and provide links to internet and TV access.

### **Finalize Educational Tools**

- Updated the fact sheet and self-assessment series with new graphics, photos, and information, July 2010. The fact sheets can be viewed and downloaded from the Program website, [www.uri.edu/ce/healthylandscapes/livestock/livestock\\_publications.htm](http://www.uri.edu/ce/healthylandscapes/livestock/livestock_publications.htm).
- Printed an additional 3,000 color post cards with updated information, July 2010.
- Continue to update and maintain Program website, [www.uri.edu/ce/healthylandscapes](http://www.uri.edu/ce/healthylandscapes).

All education and outreach tools developed for this Program, including the slideshow and display posters can be viewed and downloaded from the Program website, [www.uri.edu/ce/healthylandscapes/livestock/livestock\\_tools.htm](http://www.uri.edu/ce/healthylandscapes/livestock/livestock_tools.htm).

## Education and Outreach

- Delivered a 2-hour slideshow on livestock pollution risks and BMPs; and conducted a tour of existing and planned BMPs at URI Peckham Farm with 50 first year URI Animal Science students (November 2009).
- Project staff participated in three educational workshops for RI livestock owners coordinated by the Northern Rhode Island Conservation District (NRICD), April – June 2010. Conducted a short presentation on livestock BMPs and Program resources.
- Project staff and volunteers continued to conduct outreach at URI 4-H Program events.
- Project staff developed a poster highlighting Program accomplishments and outcomes and attended the USDA NIFA National Water Conference, Hilton Head, SC, February 2010.

## Summative Program Evaluation

A summative program evaluation was conducted to track and summarize changes in the target audiences' knowledge, attitudes, skills and behavior.

- Three on-line surveys were developed and conducted from March – May 2010. One survey was developed for each of the following: Project Steering Committee; Trained 4-H Program Volunteers; and Program Participants.
- A comprehensive summary report was developed in June 2010 and can be viewed and downloaded (along with the surveys and formative program evaluation tools) from the Program website, [www.uri.edu/ce/healthylandscapes/livestock/livestock\\_voeducation.htm](http://www.uri.edu/ce/healthylandscapes/livestock/livestock_voeducation.htm).

## Other Related Projects

The NRICD in partnership with the RI DEM Division of Agriculture and the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is conducting livestock inventories throughout RI. This includes the distribution of URI fact sheets and post cards and is expected to continue beyond the scope of this project.

- 433 livestock farm inventories throughout 8 RI towns have been conducted, September 2009 – May 2010. Additional livestock inventories and distribution of Program resources is expected to continue beginning September 2010.

Through projects funded by the USDA NRCS, Project staff participated in the planning, installation and evaluation of innovative livestock BMPs at URI Peckham Farm. Practices include the use of enhanced infiltration and geo-textiles for livestock heavy use areas (August 2008); and a forced aeration compost system (August 2010).

- A fact sheet on general manure composting (*Composting Manure On-Farm: Basics for Small Acreage Livestock Farms*) was developed through the NRCS project (July 2010) and is housed on the Program website, [www.uri.edu/ce/healthylandscapes/livestock/livestock\\_publications.htm](http://www.uri.edu/ce/healthylandscapes/livestock/livestock_publications.htm). The Program website will also be used to house a demonstration site page and fact sheet about the URI Peckham Farm composting system.
- Project staff participated in a tour of these BMPs, conducted for NRCS staff, July 2010. Distributed Healthy Landscapes Program materials including the updated fact sheet and self-assessment series and post card. Discussed use of URI Peckham Farm to conduct education and training with the URI 4-H Program and Animal and Veterinary Science students.