



Whole Farm Conservation Planning

www.wiscran.org

(715) 423-2070

www.wi.nrcs.usda.gov

Cranberry Nutrient Management Top Ten Questions

Q: Can I hire someone to write my nutrient management plan?

A: Yes. Wisconsin State Administrative Code ATCP 50.04 states that, “A nutrient management planner qualified under s. ATCP 50.48 shall prepare or approve the plan.” Planners with certain professional certifications, such as Certified Crop Advisors (CCA’s), are presumptively qualified to write nutrient management plans.

Q: Is *this* what you want?

A: Maybe. Grower-developed plans take many different forms, and there is no one way to put a plan together. The important thing is that the plan summarizes previous management efforts and takes into account recent observations and measurements (including soil and tissue tests) to develop a strategy for the upcoming season. Please contact Tod Planer, Julie Ammel, or Michael Stinebrink, at (715) 423-2070, for assistance with your plan or to have it reviewed.

Q: Is there a deadline for having a plan developed after attending training?

A: Yes. You should submit your plan within 12 months of attending a DATCP-certified training course. In addition, ATCP 50 requires that all Wisconsin farmers have a nutrient management plan in place by January 1, 2008. Some farmers are already required to have a plan.

Q: Do I have to send in updated plans every year?

A: No. If you are writing your own nutrient management plan, you will have to submit your first plan to the instructor(s) of the training session. Final certification will be made at the conclusion of the growing season. Then, landowners are deemed qualified to update their own plans for 4 years. There is no requirement to submit your plan to anyone, if you are a qualified planner.

Q: Is financial assistance available for writing a plan?

A: Yes. Financial assistance for nutrient management is currently available through both the USDA’s Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) and the Wisconsin State Cranberry Growers Association’s Whole Farm Planning Incentive Program (WFPIP). Contact the WSCGA or NRCS, or surf the web (www.wiscran.org/WholeFarmPlanning) for more information.

Q: Where should I send my soil and tissue samples?

A: Submit soil samples to labs that are certified by the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection (DATCP). This will ensure that the same testing methodology is used on your samples as was used by the University of Wisconsin to develop fertilizer recommendations. There is no such listing of certified labs for tissue testing. Consider using a lab that is certified through the North American Proficiency Testing Program.

Q: How do I convert the numbers on the fertilizer bag to actual pounds of nutrients?

A: The first three numbers on a fertilizer bag are % N - % P₂O₅ - % K₂O. To calculate the pounds of N, P₂O₅, and K₂O, simply multiply the percentages by the total pounds of fertilizer:

$$\begin{aligned} 75 \text{ lbs. of 9-20-19} &= 9\% \text{ N} \times 75 \text{ lbs. fertilizer} = 6.75 \text{ lbs. N (nitrogen)} \\ &= 20\% \text{ P}_2\text{O}_5 \times 75 \text{ lbs. fertilizer} = 15 \text{ lbs. P}_2\text{O}_5 \\ &= 19\% \text{ K}_2\text{O} \times 75 \text{ lbs. fertilizer} = 14.25 \text{ lbs. K}_2\text{O} \end{aligned}$$

To convert lbs. of P₂O₅ and K₂O to lbs. of phosphorous (P) and potassium (K), multiply the oxide forms by the following conversion factors. (Note: Nitrogen is already in elemental form.)

$$\begin{aligned} 15 \text{ lbs. P}_2\text{O}_5 \times 0.437 &= 6.6 \text{ lbs. P (phosphorous)} \\ 14.25 \text{ lbs. K}_2\text{O} \times 0.830 &= 11.8 \text{ lbs. K (potassium)} \end{aligned}$$

Q: Can I obtain electronic copies of the optional forms, which were introduced at the training sessions?

A: Yes. Call or email Michael Stinebrink (michael.stinebrink@wi.usda.gov) or Julie Ammel (julie.ammel@wi.usda.gov) for the *Microsoft Word* and *Excel* files.

Q: Am I required to have a whole farm conservation plan, pest management plan, and/or irrigation management plan, too?

A: No. A nutrient management plan is required as part of the state's Agricultural Performance Standards; the other plans are voluntary. Your conservation plan may include nutrient, pest, and/or irrigation water management, if these conservation practices were selected by you.

Q: Where can I find more information about financial assistance for conservation projects such as new irrigation systems, tailwater recovery systems, pest scouting, or erosion control projects?

A: Surf the web: www.wiscran.org/WholeFarmPlanning. A conservation plan is often a prerequisite for participation in conservation programs. Contact WSCGA or NRCS for more information or to begin developing a conservation plan.