

October 1999

## FEEDLOT LITERATURE REVIEW COMPLETE

### I. Research Review complete

For nearly four months, 100 University of Minnesota researchers and their partners pored through academic journals in search of information on the 12 major topics in the Feedlot GEIS. The researchers' quest is now complete and editors are putting the finishing touches on a 1,500 page comprehensive analysis of their findings. The final document was compiled by teams of researchers and all reports were reviewed by the EQB, the advisory committee and a group of external reviewers from around the country convened for purposes of this project.

As a result of their efforts, EQB will soon have a landmark reference tool to use throughout the feedlot study.

"The summary is an excellent starting point for the next level of EQB decisionmaking. The summary points out the differences of opinion and the gaps in the research. The advisory committee and EQB will use this information as they decide on the additional research needed to complete the GEIS," said EQB Director, Mike Sullivan.

#### 1. Research Review Available

Because environmental agencies in other states and several libraries are showing strong interest in the research summary, the EQB will make a limited number of copies available for sale (at cost) at the Minnesota Book Store.

The report will also be available October 1 in the MNPlanning EQB Library, the Legislative Reference Library and regional libraries in St. Cloud, Willmar, Fergus Falls, Marshall, Mankato and Rochester. In late October, the EQB will post the report on the MN Planning website at [www.mnplan.state.mn.us](http://www.mnplan.state.mn.us)

#### 2. Box this

The summary explores the research on 12 areas affected by the livestock industry. The topic areas are: social/community; land use; role of government; industry structure and competitiveness; profitability and economic viability; external benefits and costs; water; air quality and odor; soils; manure and crop nutrients; human health and animal health.

#### 3. Thank you!

EQB thanks Bev Durgan, UM Project Leader and Kathy Draeger, UM project coordinator—the literature summary would not exist without them. Thanks also to the advisory committee, who spent hundreds of hours reviewing drafts and advising the researchers on their work.

#### 4. Next steps

**The EQB will develop the "GEIS study workplan" in cooperation with the Advisory Committee and other state agencies. When it is complete the workplan will spell out the research that is needed to complete the feedlot GEIS. The research will be carried out by [ ] contract researchers in the year 2000.** The EQB expects to complete its GEIS study workplan by December 1999.

## **II Feedlot Inventory Pilots**

EQB is working with Minnesota Planning's Land Management Information Center and other interested groups to gather information on feedlot location, species, size and number of operators in the state. The foundation for this count is existing county level feedlot inventories augmented with statewide data bases. The pilot projects in a few counties will allow EQB to determine how to best gather similar information throughout the state.

## **III. Staffing**

Farewell to Susan Schmidt who will leave the GEIS project October 15 to take on a new role as State Director of the Minnesota Office for the Trust for Public Land. . The EQB hopes to announce Susan's replacement in October. Gregg Downing, Mike Sullivan and the new staffer will continue Susan's work with the GEIS.

## **IV. New CAC member**

**The EQB welcomed Pat Bloomgren, Director of the Division of Environmental Health, Minnesota Department of Health, to the CAC in August. Pat brings years of experience working on tough environmental and public health issues for the state to the Advisory Council.**

## **V. Background**

Animal Agriculture, a major component in Minnesota's economy has changed dramatically since 1989. A decade-long consolidation of smaller farms into larger ones, agribusiness' continuing shift to larger feedlots and public concern over feedlot impact has garnered much attention, and controversy, throughout our state.

As a result, the 1998 Legislature directed the EQB to conduct a state-wide study of animal agriculture and feedlots to assess their present and projected impact on Minnesota. The study, a Generic Environmental Impact Statement (GEIS), is looking at the ways that animal agriculture and feedlots affect Minnesotans, the state's economy, and its health, environment and quality of life. The study is expected to cost from \$3 - \$5 million to complete.

The comprehensive study is believed to be the first US study to explore the statewide impact of the entire livestock industry. When completed in 2001, the study will offer Minnesotans and their policy makers scientific data on the livestock industry and recommendations on future options for the industry.

Minnesota's 15-member Environmental Quality Board (EQB) and the state's long range strategic planning department, Minnesota Planning, are responsible for conducting and managing the

Livestock GEIS. The Minnesota legislature is slated to receive the study results in mid - 2001 prior to the 2002 session.

A 24 member Advisory Committee, appointed by the EQB, is charged with ensuring that the public, including interest groups and stakeholders, is involved in shaping the study and its findings.

## **VI. Further Information**

For further information contact (place box of contact info similar to previous piece)

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