

# FEEDLOT TECHNICAL WORKPAPERS CONTRACTED

During the period April through July 2000, the Generic Environmental Impact Statement (GEIS) for Animal Agriculture entered a critical phase. In April 2000 a Request for Proposals (RFP) was issued in the State Register asking for interested contractors to submit bids for collecting the detailed technical information required by the Final GEIS. These Technical Work Papers (TWP) will examine a number of critical areas and questions in greater depth than the 1,500 page Literature Summary completed previously by the University of Minnesota and their partners. The major areas of investigation for the TWP's will include;

1. Overall Description of Animal Agri.
2. Social and Community Topics
3. Land Use and Conflict Resolution
4. Role of Government
5. Economic Impacts
6. Water Quality Issues
7. Air Quality Issues
8. Soils and Manure
9. Human Health Issues
10. Animal Health and Well-Being

Bids and preliminary estimates were reviewed by the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC). CAC selected the firms to be interviewed, help conduct the interviews and recommended which firms to hire and how much to fund each area of investigation. The EQB subcommittee for Animal Agriculture then reviewed the CAC decisions, recommended approval and authorized EQB staff to proceed with contract negotiations. Draft contracts were drawn up and sent to the selected firms. The contract negotiations are underway and should be complete by the beginning of August 2000.

---

## Literature Summary Still A Big Hit!

Several US States have already purchased copies of the Literature Summary developed as part of the GEIS process. Feedlot regulators from around the US have commented that this information was an extremely useful reference. Environmental agencies in other states and several libraries have shown a strong

interest in the research summary, the EQB will make a limited number of copies available for sale at the Minnesota Book Store 651/297-3000 (metro) and 800/657-3757 (nationwide) (M-F 8am-5pm).

The report is also available at the MNPlanning/EQB Library, the Legislative Reference Library and regional libraries in St. Cloud, Willmar, Fergus Falls, Marshall, Mankato and Rochester. The EQB has posted the report on the Minnesota Planning website at:  
[www.mnplan.state.mn.us](http://www.mnplan.state.mn.us).

---

## Next steps

The CAC will review the draft TWP's offering constructive criticism and extracting knowledge to help form the basis for future policy recommendations. It is expected that the TWP's and the resulting GEIS will be widely distributed throughout the USA. This document should give the most current and comprehensive picture of many inter-related aspects of Animal Agriculture available. In addition, when it is complete the GEIS will identify the further research needed to more completely understand the impacts of feedlots on Society, Human Health and the Environment.

## Feedlot Inventory Pilots

EQB is working with Minnesota Planning's Land Management Information Center (LMIC) and other groups to gather information on feedlot location and species, size of herd and number of operations in the state. Existing county level feedlot inventories and statewide databases are the starting points for this count.

**The TWP's explore the aspects of 12 major 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.**

### **New CAC Members**

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 feedlot study and its findings.

The EQB would like to welcome Larry Schultz from Izaak Walton League, Myron Just from MN Agri-Growth Council and Tom Dunnwald from MN Lakes Association to the CAC.

### **Background**

Animal agriculture, a major component in Minnesota's economy has gone through dramatic changes. A decade-long consolidation of smaller farms into larger ones, a continuing shift to larger feedlots, and public concern over feedlot impact has generated much attention and controversy throughout our state. The globalization of Agriculture and all other commerce is causing us to reevaluate what we mean by the "family farm". We are seeing new production efficiencies and economies of scale. We are also seeing new problems and diseconomies of scale.

As a result, the 1998 Legislature directed the EQB to conduct a statewide study of animal agriculture and feedlots to assess their present and projected impact on Minnesota. The study, a Generic Environmental Impact Statement (GEIS), is examining the effects of animal agriculture and feedlots on Minnesota's economy, health, environment and quality of life. The objective of the study is to provide balanced information on animal agriculture and recommendations on future options for animal agriculture in the state.

The comprehensive study is believed to be the first in the U.S. to explore the statewide impact of the entire livestock industry. When completed, the study will offer Minnesotans and their policymakers scientific data on the livestock industry and recommendations on future options for the industry. The current plan is for a final GEIS to be completed by December 30, 2001.

The Environmental Quality Board, staffed by Minnesota Planning, draws together five citizens and the heads of 10 state agencies that play a vital role in Minnesota's environment and development. The board develops policy, creates long-range plans and reviews proposed projects that would significantly influence Minnesota's environment.

July 2000

#### **For information, contact:**

George Johnson  
GEIS Project Manager  
651/296-2888

Gregg Downing  
GEIS Research Coordinator  
651/205-4660

Toll-free voice mailbox:  
800/657-3794

E-mail:  
[animal.ag@mnplan.state.mn.us](mailto:animal.ag@mnplan.state.mn.us)



658 Cedar Street  
St. Paul, MN 55155

651/296-3985  
Fax: 651/296-3698

[www.mnplan.state.mn.us](http://www.mnplan.state.mn.us)