

The Animal Agriculture Discussion Group

EPA and the Animal Agriculture Sectors Collaborate to Protect Water Quality

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Office of Water and animal agriculture stakeholders are working together to protect water quality through voluntary collaborations that supplement existing regulatory programs.

To facilitate open dialogue, in 2013 EPA established the **Animal Agriculture Discussion Group (AADG)**—an informal group of representative stakeholders from the major animal agriculture sectors (pork, poultry, beef, dairy), U.S. Department of Agriculture, academia, and states.

Core participants include National Cattlemen's Beef Association, National Pork Producers Council, U.S. Poultry & Egg Association, United Egg Producers, National Milk Producers Federation, Innovation Center for U.S. Dairy, integrators, and individual producers.

The group convenes via meetings and calls, as well as on farms and at agricultural events around the country, to keep lines of communication open and develop a shared understanding of how to enhance agricultural practices and maintain clean water.

The AADG has become a forum for open discussion and strengthening relationships that underpin partnership projects, like those noted here. These collaborations are true examples of how EPA and the agriculture community can work together for solutions that benefit a triple bottom line: the **environment, farmers,** and the **economy.**



Farmer Award Programs

EPA and national animal agriculture associations recognize and promote good practices through animal sector environmental stewardship award programs.

Nutrient Recycling Challenge

EPA and twenty partners are hosting a global competition to innovate affordable technologies that can help farmers recycle nutrients from pork and dairy manure into valuable products.

Outreach and Education Materials

EPA and the animal agriculture community have worked together to develop:

- a [video series](#) on environmental management for poultry producers
- a web-based two-way [educational program](#) for agencies and farmers to learn from each other about feeding operations and water quality protection
- a pamphlet on the [Beneficial Uses of Manure and Environmental Protection](#)

Looking Ahead

The vision for the next phase of the AADG is to identify priorities around common goals and:

- develop **pilot projects** with metrics to evaluate their effectiveness
- showcase **success stories** to promote a greater understanding by regulatory agencies, agricultural stakeholders, and the general public
- collaborate with a **broader community** of stakeholders, and identify further project opportunities at **regional, local, and sector-specific levels.**

www.epa.gov/npdes/animal-feeding-operations-afos-animal-agriculture-industry-partnerships



Photos courtesy of USDA NRCS and the Livestock and Poultry Environmental Learning Center