

Fw: WSDF Reminder to Washington Dairy Producers - November 27, 2012

Sheila Fleming to: R10YVNitrate

01/10/2013 01:20 PM

----- Forwarded by Sheila Fleming/R10/USEPA/US on 01/10/2013 01:19 PM -----

From: Carol Harrison/R10/USEPA/US
To: Sheila Fleming/R10/USEPA/US@EPA,
Date: 12/10/2012 06:10 AM
Subject: Fw: WSDF Reminder to Washington Dairy Producers - November 27, 2012

Carol Harrison
Office of Environment Assessment
Risk Evaluation Unit
(206) 553-1526 (phone)
(206) 553-0119 (fax)

----- Forwarded by Carol Harrison/R10/USEPA/US on 12/10/2012 06:09 AM -----

From: "Habets, Bonda - NRCS, Spokane, WA" <Bonda.Habets@wa.usda.gov>
To: Carol Harrison/R10/USEPA/US@EPA
Cc: "Johnson, Larry - NRCS, Spokane, WA" <Larry.A.Johnson@wa.usda.gov>
Date: 12/07/2012 05:17 PM
Subject: FW: WSDF Reminder to Washington Dairy Producers - November 27, 2012

Carol

Here is an electronic copy of NRCS comments to the Lower Yakima Valley Nitrate Study. We will be sending them hardcopy with signatures also. Thank you for the time and opportunity to comment. The submission page was not working.

Bonda Habets
WA State Resource Conservationist
316 W Boone Ave, Spokane WA 99201
(509) 323-2961

From: Rides at the door, Roylene - NRCS, Spokane, WA
Sent: Wednesday, November 28, 2012 9:01 AM
To: Habets, Bonda - NRCS, Spokane, WA; Johnson, Larry - NRCS, Spokane, WA
Subject: Fw: WSDF Reminder to Washington Dairy Producers - November 27, 2012

More time to send in comments.

From: Washington State Dairy Federation [<mailto:wendy.wsdf@comcast.net>]
Sent: Tuesday, November 27, 2012 09:00 PM
To: Rides at the door, Roylene - NRCS, Spokane, WA
Subject: WSDF Reminder to Washington Dairy Producers - November 27, 2012

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Reminder: Important EPA Notice with Comment Instructions

Instructions for Comments on the EPA Website:

Click on the Link:

[Provide Input on Lower Yakima Valley Nitrate Study](#)

Fill out required information and add your comments in the comment block at the bottom. Then click on the "Send Us Your Input" button.

Reminder Letter:

November 27, 2012

Dear Washington Dairy Producer,

On September 20, 2012, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) released a controversial report entitled, "*Relation Between Nitrate in Water Wells and Potential Sources in the Lower Yakima Valley, Washington*" (Available at: <http://yosemite.epa.gov/r10/water.nsf/gwpu/lyakimagw>) The report states that dairy farms are the primary source of groundwater contamination. The implications of this report have the potential to affect all dairy farmers, so we felt it urgent to apprise you of the situation and let you know what you can do to help.

There appears to be broad consensus this report was developed using extremely poor scientific standards, leading to equally flawed conclusions. As such, we have assembled an experienced team of scientists and technical experts from various fields to develop detailed review(s) of the report. Given the amount of time needed to conduct a multi-party independent review, we have also requested that EPA extend the current public comment period deadline of **Nov. 30** until such time that all primary data used to create this report is made available.

Based on their report, EPA has taken the additional step of instigating legal action against the four Yakima dairy families who voluntarily agreed to participate in the study. These dairies have been issued Consent Orders that contain a litany of costly requirements that if implemented, will likely put these farms out of business. These dairies, like most, have invested massive amounts of time, money and labor into implementing scientifically-based nutrient management practices that have been inspected by third party governmental organizations like the Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA). To assist them, we have been working diligently with our major cooperatives and associations in other States to create a legal defense fund so that individual producers are no longer left to fend for themselves in matters that will ultimately affect us all.

Regardless of the size of your farm, production-style or location, the outcome of this report and accompanying legal action will impact all dairy farmers in the state, which is why we need your help. We are asking that you:

1. **Submit public comments to EPA no later than the Nov. 30th deadline.** Dairy farmers need to explain their commitment to environmental stewardship by submitting as many

comments as possible. Comments do not have to be detailed or scientific; just a few personal sentences about the amount of time and resources you spend managing your farm and manure. We've included talking points below that you can use (feel free to copy and paste). The report and comment submission page can be found by entering "EPA Yakima groundwater" into your browser or by going to:

<http://yosemite.epa.gov/r10/water.nsf/gwpu/lyakimagw>

2. **Make sure that your nutrient management plan is up to date.** If your plan needs updated, immediately contact your local conservation district or private nutrient management planner and ask them to update your plan as soon as possible.

EPA public comment talking points

- The release of the report and related legal action has created much anxiety in the dairy community greatly hampering collaborative efforts such as the Ground Water Management process in Yakima. (i.e. GWMA).
- Dairy farms are the only agricultural sector where fertilizer application is regulated (not tree-fruit, beef cattle, wheat, potatoes, etc.)
- Dairy farmers adhere to science-based NRCS standards via farm plans that are routinely inspected by WSDA. Why is EPA now adding a second contradictory set of standards on top of federal USDA guidelines, that have been in place for years.
- Implementing and complying with these standards has been extremely costly and time consuming, but the industry has complied with those responsibilities.
- The comment period should be extended to allow for a more thorough review by a land grant university or other experts.
- Reliable information and science is essential in any endeavor, short cuts in the science process by EPA will not maintain integrity or trust in agency credibility.

If you have questions or need assistance, please call us at 360.482.3485.

Sincerely,

[Jay Gordon](#), Executive Director

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