

AGRICULTURE

IOWA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

END OF SESSION, 2009

STOCKPILING DRY MANURE FROM CON- FINEMENT OPERATIONS

Establishes new regulations for stockpiling dry poultry manure from confinement operations. Currently, the Department of Natural Resources has a guidance document producers must follow, but do not have specific rules. The bill differentiates between stockpiling on Karst terrain and other soils. Karst terrain is generally the limestone rock land in north-eastern Iowa, which provides direct conduits to our groundwater. The regulations on Karst terrain are stricter. It also establishes a 1,250 foot minimum separation distance for the stockpiles from residences, schools, businesses, churches, and public use areas.

(HF 735 Signed, effective 4/2/09)

GRAIN INDEMNITY FUND UPDATES

As of March 19th, farmers will receive 90% of their grain losses, up to \$300,000, due to non-payment of grain sold to an elevator or ethanol plant. The current maximum payment is \$150,000. With the price of grain today, legislators wanted to increase this amount because it doesn't take as many bushels to reach this \$150,000 maximum. The bill allows for the possibility of two dates to file claims, to ensure that producers who delivered grain to Vera Sun's ethanol plants after October 31, 2008, are covered, and for any future bankruptcies that may occur. The bill also changes when fees paid into the fund are no longer required to be assessed. Current law says the fees are automatically waived once the balance in the fund exceeds \$6 million. The bill increases this to \$8 million. The bill does not change current law prohibiting claims for grain sold on credit-sale contracts. These are also known as deferred payment contracts or futures contracts.

(HF 374 Signed, effective 3/19/09)

SOYBEAN ASSOCIATION AND CORN GROWERS AS- SOCIATION

Allows the Iowa Soybean Association and the Iowa Corn Growers Association to enter into loan agreements. The Soybean Association is going to build a new office in Ankeny (currently renting in Urbandale) and they need this authority to get a loan. Check-off dollars are used to pay back the loan (currently used to pay for rent). Corn Growers are also given authority to pay \$100 per diems for their directors, which is the same authority given to the Soybean Association last year.

(SF 342 Signed, effective 7/1/09)

SURFACE APPLICATION OF MANURE ON SNOW OR FROZEN GROUND

Allows livestock producers to surface apply all types of manure (liquid or dry) on snow covered or frozen ground except as follows. Bans surface application of liquid manure from confinement operations on snow covered ground from December 21-April 1, and on frozen ground from February 1-April 1, unless there is an emergency. An emergency only occurs if the application is needed due to unforeseen circumstances affecting the

storage of the liquid manure, which includes natural disasters, unusual weather conditions, or equipment or structural failure. An emergency does not apply because of improper design or management of the manure storage, or if the manure storage structure has a capacity to store manure for less than 180 days. The bill specifies what a producer needs to do to apply during an emergency, including calling the Department of Natural Resources field office, including acres within their manure management plan, applying only on fields with a phosphorus index rating of two or less, and temporarily blocking a surface water drain tile intake for two weeks. Exceptions to the liquid manure ban include small animal feeding operations (less than 500 animal units) and when the liquid manure can be injected or incorporated on the same day.

(SF 432 Signed, effective 7/1/09)

DRY-BEDDED CONFINEMENT OPERATIONS

Specific regulations are created in a new Code chapter for dry bedded confinement operations, which includes cattle and hog barns that use hoop buildings. These buildings generally produce and store manure solely as dry manure with bedding (i.e. cornstalks, hay, etc.). The regulations generally combine certain open feedlot regulations and confinement regulations. The bill provides stricter regulations for constructing a dry bedded confinement operation on Karst terrain or in an alluvial aquifer area (generally northern Iowa with limestone and sinkholes with direct conduits to our groundwater). The bill allows dry bedded confinements to stockpile manure. They must retain all dry bedded manure between periods of application. Separation distances are also provided.

(SF 432 Signed, effective 5/26/09)

OTHER BILLS OF INTEREST

- HF 710 Requires the Agricultural Development Authority to semi-annually report to the Legislature's Oversight Committee to provide some oversight and accountability. This authority is a stand-alone authority; they are not part of a department. (Signed, effective 7/1/09)
- SF 405 Clarifies that veterinarians can cremate animals and not be defined as a disposal plant. It also allows vets to retain dead animals in a manner that prevents an outbreak of a disease. (Signed, effective 7/1/09)
- SF 464 Modifies biodiesel blended fuel tax credit and requires a B5 biodiesel blend in all diesel fuel sold in Iowa, with some exceptions. (Died in House Ways and Means Committee)