Carver County
Environmental Services
Feedlot Program

Winter 2025
Volume 4, Issue 1

The Barnyard Buzz

2025 Carver County Feedlot Producer Workshop

Carver County Environmental Services will be hosting the annual Feedlot Producer Workshop at the Carver County Public Works Facility from 9:00 am - 12:00 pm on Tuesday, March 18, 2025. The workshop will provide feedlot operators and residents with resources and educational topics that are beneficial for farming practices and livestock production.

Presenters will include; Environmental Services, the Soil & Water Conservation District, the Natural Resource Conservation District, University of Minnesota Extension, and Central Bi-Products.

To register for the event, contact Matt Steele at 952-361-1808 or msteele@carvercountymn.gov.

Grain Storage Facility Safety Grant

The Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA) has approximately $75,000 available in funding for fiscal year 2025 to help farmers purchase and install eligible safety equipment for grain bins or silos. MDA proposals are reviewed and awarded on a first-come, first-served basis until the application period closes on May 15, 2025, or until funds run out. Grant requirements for applicants are listed below.

- You may request up to 75% of eligible expenses, up to $400 per bin or silo
- There is a limit of $2,400 per farm per fiscal year.
- Maximum of 6 bins or silos per farm per fiscal year.
- Farms may submit only one application per fiscal year.
- Payments are issued on a reimbursement basis and not in advance.

Eligible equipment must be purchased and paid for between July 1, 2023, and June 30, 2026. Eligible equipment types include; fall protection systems, air quality monitoring equipment, dust collection systems, and personal protective equipment.

To submit an application or for more information about the program, visit https://www.mda.state.mn.us and search “Grain storage facility safety grant”. If you have questions, please contact Allison Beauregard at 651-201-6653 or Allison.Beauregard@state.mn.us.

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Carver County Environmental Services

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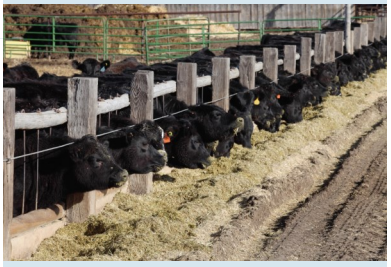

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Winter manure application restrictions at NPDES & SDS Permit sites

December - February

Applying liquid manure to frozen or snow-covered fields is prohibited.

Solid manure can be applied to frozen or snow-covered fields if **all** the following apply:

- ◊ Field is approved in MMP
- ◊ Manure not applied in vulnerable groundwater areas
- ◊ 300 ft setback to waters/ tile intakes
- ◊ Some runoff storage in tillage furrows
- ◊ Slope is 6% or less and 2% or less in February
- ◊ Under 50% chance of 1/4 inch or more of rainfall within 24 hours of application (extends to 5 days in February)
- ◊ If 2 or more inches of snow, temperature must be below 40°F for 24 hours after application (extends to 5 days in February)

March

Applying liquid and solid manure to frozen or snow-covered fields is prohibited.

Non-winter conditions

If winter conditions do not exist at application time in December - March, land application is allowed if manure is injected/ incorporated within 24 hours.

Nitrogen Best Management Practices in Vulnerable Groundwater Areas

The updated Minnesota Pollution Control Agency State Disposal System (SDS) Permit becomes effective on June 1, 2025 and the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit becomes effective on February 1, 2026. These permits apply to animal feedlots with 1,000 animal units (AU) or more, and gap sites that are under 1,000 AU, but meet the animal unit threshold of a large Concentrated Animal Feedlot Operation (CAFO).

Carver County does not have any feedlot operations large enough to be covered under these permits. However, the updated permits include changes to best management practices (BMPs) for nitrogen application in vulnerable groundwater areas.

These changes are **required** for NPDES and SDS permitholders and **recommended** for all feedlot operators applying manure in vulnerable groundwater areas.

Manure application best management practices by the time of year.

June- September
One of the following BMPs are required:

- Application to a growing perennial or row crop
- Cover crop planted prior to or within 14 days of application

October 1 - 14
Within vulnerable groundwater areas, follow the BMPs for June - September
Outside of vulnerable groundwater areas, one of the following BMPs are required:

- Follow the BMPs for June - September
- Soil temperature has reached 50 degrees F for 2 consecutive days
- Use a nitrapyrin-based nitrification inhibitor
- Split application of no more than 1/2 of the nitrogen needs

October 15 - 31 (beginning in 2027)
Within vulnerable groundwater areas, one of the following BMPs are required:

- Follow the BMPs for June - September
- Soil temperature has reached 50 degrees F for 2 consecutive days and perennial crop is grown 2 out of 5 years
- Soil temperature has reached 50 degrees F for 2 consecutive days and
  - ◊ Use a nitrapyrin-based nitrification inhibitor for all liquid manure
  - ◊ A split application of no more than ½ of the nitrogen needs for all solid manure

November (beginning in 2027)
Within vulnerable groundwater areas, one of the following BMPs are required for liquid manure application:

- Follow the BMPs for June - September
- A perennial crop is grown 2 out of 5 years
- Use a nitrapyin-based nitrification inhibitor

The MPCA has developed a map that delineates vulnerable groundwater areas and identifies sensitive features that should be considered when applying manure to reduce the risk of environmental contamination. To access this map, visit https://www.pca.state.mn.us/business-with-us/land-application-of-manure.

Agricultural Plastic Recycling program

Thanks to a partnership between Carver County Environmental Services, Revolution Plastics, and the University of Minnesota Extension, local participants recycled a total of **39,000** lbs. of plastics in 2024.

Stay tuned for 2025 program dates. For more information or questions, please contact Matt Steele at 952-361-1808 or msteele@carvercountymn.gov.

Acceptable items:

- Agriculture and grain bags
- Boat film
- Greenhouse film and covers
- Hockey rink liners
- Stretch wrap

Unacceptable items:

- Twine
- Bale wrap and net wrap
- Scrim
- Plastic containers
- Dirt, rocks, leaves

Carver County Animal Agriculture Code Update

Along with the Feedlot Management Ordinance, Carver County has additional regulations such as Conditional Use Permit requirements, location restrictions, and animal density regulations in Section 152.071 of the County Code.

To provide flexibility to County residents, Land Management staff proposed changes to allow fowl on smaller-sized lots where only pets were allowed in the past. The ordinance update now allows ten or few fowl on lots of less than 1.5 acres, whereas only dogs, cats, and other animals customarily kept as pets were previously allowed on parcels this size.

These changes were approved by the Planning Commission on October 15, 2024 and adopted by the County Board on November 19, 2024. If you have any questions about the amendment, please contact the Land Management Department at 952-361– 1820 or landmanagement@carvercountymn.gov.

Carver County SWCD Equipment Rental

The Carver County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) recently purchased a Great Plains Grain Drill, which is available for rent by landowners. The drill is designed for seeding cover crops, native grasses, small grain, legumes, and grass. It is also effective for renovating pastures and seeding waterways and filter strips. SWCD staff will deliver it to your field and assist with setup and calibration.

Drill Specifications

- 10’ plant width and a 75 hp tractor is recommended for planting
- 15 row planter with 7.5” row spacing
- Electronic acre meter Included
- Main box capacity - 23.75 Bu; Native Grass Box - 10 Bu; Small Seed Box - 2.4 Bu

The minimum rental rate for Carver County residents is $150. For fields between 14 and 39 acres, the rate is $12 per acre, while parcels of 40 acres or more are charged at a reduced rate of $10 per acre. For residents outside of Carver County, the minimum rental rate is $200, with a rate of $15 per acre for parcels of 15 acres or more. Please be aware that rental rates may increase in 2025.

The SWCD also has a tree planter and a Finn Krimper available for rent. If you’re interested in equipment rental, contact Terry Meiller at 952-466-5230 or tmeiller@carvercountymn.gov.

Harmful impacts of backyard burning

- Largest source of dioxin, which is a powerful carcinogen
- Produces environmental risks such as water and soil contamination and air pollution
- Proximity to animal feed and food crops create a risk to our food supply
- Backyard burning contributes to almost 50% of all wildfires in Minnesota each year

Did you know?

Burning leaves in Minnesota is illegal.

Carver County Environmental Services

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Open Burning

Open burning in Carver County is regulated by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and Carver County Environmental Services. Permits are required year-round, regardless of snow cover, for all open burning, except for recreational fires under 3 feet in height and diameter. Only tree debris and other vegetation (excluding leaves) can be burned, and materials must be generated on the property where the burn occurs.

Open burning permits can be obtained online via the DNR website or by contacting Carver County Environmental Services or a local Township Fire Warden. Permits are valid until the end of the calendar year in which they were purchased. Permits for structure fires or running fires over 1 acre require DNR approval. It is illegal to burn household, business, or farm waste, except for baling twine and paper feed sacks without plastic liners.

For more information, contact Carver County Environmental Services at 952-361-1800 or visit www.carvercountymn.gov and search "open burning".

Backyard Garbage Burning

Although burning or burying garbage is illegal in Carver County, these practices still occur. Burning trash in backyard fire pits or burn barrels involves low temperature fires that produce a lot of smoke and pollutants such as carbon monoxide/dioxide, nitrogen oxides, benzene, dioxins, lead and mercury. These pollutants contribute to air pollution and pose serious health risks.

Research by the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has identified burn barrels as the leading source of dioxin in the United States. Dioxin is a powerful carcinogen that presents significant health dangers to both humans and animals.

It is essential for everyone to stop burning household garbage in burn barrels and instead use local garbage services. This will help protect public health, reduce pollution, and create a safer, cleaner environment for all.

For more information about the negative impacts of burning garbage, visit www.pca.state.mn.us and search "burn barrel."

Household hazardous waste collection

Saturday, April 26, 2025
8:00am to 12:00pm
3580 Co Rd 10 N
Watertown, MN 55388

Special waste collections

Saturday, May 17, 2025
8:00am to 12:00pm
Carver County Public Works
11360 US Hwy 212
Cologne, MN 55322

Saturday, September 14, 2025
8:00am to 12:00pm
Hollywood Twp Public Works
3480 Co Rd 21
Mayer, MN 55360

For more information, visit www.recyclecarver.org and search “special waste collections.”

Nutrition Management for Dairy Cows

Effective nutrition management for cows is essential to ensuring their health, productivity, and overall well-being. Whether the cows are raised for milk production, meat production, or breeding, proper nutrition is key to maximizing their potential and minimizing health issues. The University of Minnesota Extension provides the following guidelines listed below to successfully manage the nutrition of dairy cows.

Feed bunk management - There should be 2 to 5 percent of feed remaining after cows have been fed. This small remainder is key to maintaining optimal feeding practices.

Lactating cows require 24 inches of bunk space while close-up and recently fresh cows should have 30 inches. If animals have access to feed at all times, 18 inches of bunk space is sufficient.

Cows are naturally inclined to graze in certain positions that allow for efficient feeding. The ideal grazing posture is where cows can eat with their head comfortably down and neck extended, and the surface of the bunk should be smooth.

Ration formulation - When formulating rations for a herd, it is essential to select an appropriate reference cow to ensure the nutritional needs of the entire herd are met. A commonly recommended practice is to choose a cow that represents the 75th percentile of the herd, which reflects a higher-than-average but still typical production level. To calculate reference cow, determine the sum of average peak milk for older cows and daily average milk of all cows, and divide by 2.

Example:

- Average peak milk of older cows: 70 lbs./day
- Daily average milk of all cows: 60 lbs./day
- (70 + 60) ÷ 2 = 65 lbs of milk to balance for

For two groups, balance rations at 20 percent above the average milk production for each group and for three or more groups, balance rations at 10 to 15 percent above average milk production of each group.

Water intake - Ensuring dairy cows have access to adequate water is essential for their health, digestion, and productivity. The guideline of 3 to 5 pounds of water per pound of dry matter consumed helps farmers manage water intake effectively.

Example: 40 lbs. of dry matter consumed at 4 lbs. of water/lb. of milk dry matter intake = 160 lbs. of water/day or 160 ÷ 8 lb./gallon = 20 gallons

Ration check - All rations should contain at least 1 feed from each of the following categories; forage, grains, protein supplements, mineral, and salt.

For more information on effectively managing your dairy herd nutrition, visit https://extension.umn.edu and search “Formulating dairy cow rations”.

Caring for chickens in cold weather

- **Provide supplemental heat when coop temperatures fall below 35 degrees F**
- **Collect eggs as soon as you can and throw away any with cracked shells**
- **Make sure your chickens have free access to fresh, clean water**
- **Manage manure and provide ventilation to control moisture in your coop**
- **Heavier standard and dual-purpose breeds can handle the cold better**

For more information on poultry keeping, contact Colleen Carlson, Extension Educator, at 952-466-5300 or traxl042@umn.edu.

Mission Statement

"The Carver County Environmental Services Department is committed to protecting the environment through public service, education, and innovation."

The MPCA is a sponsoring agency with a grant supporting a portion of the delegated Carver County feedlot program. Carver County does not claim that MPCA endorses its products or services.

Managing Dairy Cattle During Cold Weather Conditions

As winter sets in and temperatures drop, managing cattle through the cold months becomes a critical concern for farmers in Carver County. The harsh conditions of winter, with snow, ice, and freezing temperatures, present unique challenges for both livestock and caretakers. Cattle, though hardy animals, require proper care and attention to ensure their health and well-being during this time.

In colder months, their nutritional needs increase, and their ability to maintain body heat is essential. This makes managing shelter, food, water, and overall care vital to keeping the herd strong and healthy. Understanding the behaviors and needs of cattle in winter is essential to ensuring their survival and productivity throughout the season.

Water - Water tanks and waterers should be checked frequently for frozen water. Cows can draw water at a rate of 3 to 5 gallons per minute, meaning it's crucial for the water supply and system to keep up with their demand. To ensure they have access to adequate hydration, it's important to maintain the water temperature within their preferred range of 40º to 65º F. During colder months, using a thermometer can be an effective way to monitor the temperature and check if tank heaters or waterer heating elements are functioning properly.

Shelter - It's essential to provide cattle with shelter from the elements in cold weather conditions. A windbreak can offer some relief, however, a roofed structure is the ideal solution to keep them sheltered from the elements. In addition to a secure shelter, it's important to provide deep. Clean, and dry bedding to maintain warmth and comfort for the animals.

Feed - Cows, particularly those in less than moderate body condition, require more calories to maintain body heat during colder months of the year. It's important to work closely with your nutritionist to determine the best diet and management strategies for your herd based on their body condition, age, and environmental factors. This might include adjusting their energy intake, such as providing a higher-energy ration, to help them maintain or gain body weight during the winter months. For cows in thinner condition or heifers, you may want to consider sorting them out from the rest of the herd. By providing these animals with more specialized care such as extra feed and a less crowded, draft-free shelter, you can help them maintain their health and avoid further energy depletion.

Foot traction - Preventing the accumulation of ice on walking surfaces is essential for the safety of both you and your animals. Ice can create hazardous conditions, leading to slips and falls. To reduce this risk, consider ruffing up the surface and adding sand or gravel for better traction.

Herd health - It's important to monitor your herd closely for signs of cold stress, particularly among older cows, those with previous health issues, and calves. These groups are more susceptible to the harsh effects of winter. Frostbite is also a major concern during colder months. Cows leaving the milking barn or parlor with wet teats, or calves with exposed ears, are particularly vulnerable to frostbite. Pay attention to these areas, as frostbite can quickly develop in extreme cold. Taking proactive steps like ensuring cows are dry before going outside and providing adequate shelter can help mitigate these risks.

For more information on managing your dairy cattle, visit https://extension.umn.edu and search "Managing dairy cattle in cold weather".