

CAFO Improvement Fund

The Idaho Legislature appropriated \$5 million of Idaho's surplus tax revenue for environmental projects to improve CAFO operations and help them meet their manure and nutrient management goals. Legislative intent was to have the fund managed to meet industry needs and representatives appointed by industry make up four of the seven committee members. The committee members are Dr. April Leytem and Tanya Hibler appointed by Idaho Dairymen's Association, Megan Satterwhite and Valene Lickley appointed by the Idaho Cattle Association, Mary Anne Nelson from the Idaho Department of Environmental Quality (IDEQ), Mitch Vermeer from the Idaho State Department of Agriculture (ISDA), and Dr. Zachary Kayler from the University of Idaho. The committee of seven is responsible for creating project priorities, ranking applications, and distributing funds to approved projects. The committee has met and is preparing for the application period.

The CAFO Improvement Fund is a 60/40 cost share program with a \$1 million cap per owner/partnership. Cost share dollars can come from in-kind labor and/or equipment, cash on hand, NRCS grant funds, or equivalent program. Funds will be distributed by reimbursement of receipts following project completion. In cases where applicable, monitoring project success will be required. As an example, this could simply be collecting manure/lagoon water samples before and after project implementation to demonstrate an improvement in solids separation. It should be noted that one application criterion is applicant's willingness to share their project successes with others by means of public outreach (i.e., an article in the Line Rider magazine, hosting a field day, or presenting at a local event).

The 60-day application period opens July 1st, 2022 and closes August 30th, 2022. IDEQ will house the application and guidance documents on their website and a link to the materials will be sent out to the Feeder Members as soon as it is established.

A webinar will be hosted on July 19th, 2022 at 1pm to discuss the application requirements/process and to help answer any questions. The committee hopes producers will have an opportunity to review the application prior to the webinar so they can come prepared with questions or challenges. A link to the webinar will be provided with application materials.

The fund is focused on improvements to soils, water, and air quality and any projects under those areas will be considered. However, projects focusing on manure and nutrient management will be given priority. A non-exhaustive list of possible projects is below.

- ❖ Potential Improvements
 - New lagoon construction
 - Lagoon lining
 - Settling cells
 - Compost turners
 - Flow meters

Materials will be created to help assist in the application process. The committee is currently creating an application guide and frequently asked questions document to help producers better understand the uses and limitations of the funding. If you have questions regarding projects and applications, please reach out to Valene Lickley (970) 571-9086 or valickley@agpros.com or Megan Satterwhite (208) 420-6795 or megan@idahodairymens.org.