

AN EMS IS FLEXIBLE:

We are supportive of the ongoing stewardship that America's ranchers are currently practicing. Rules and regulations shouldn't be 'one-size-fits-all.' Each region and livestock species is unique.

Robert Lee, National Cattlemen's Beef Association

How Is an EMS Useful?

Because the EMS process results in documentation of stewardship practices, the EMS can assist in compliance with the law. Farmers have also used EMS to pursue special marketing labels, in building good community relationships and in sharing information with regulators, processors and buyers. The EMS may help negotiate lower rates with insurance providers. Wherever it starts, the EMS is a valuable route to sustaining a farm operation now, and ensuring future generations of successful farmers.

AN EMS PUTS THE FARMER IN THE LEAD:

With the state permit you have one choice. Under the EMS/XL program that's supported by EPA, you design your own program. You may have to change and tweak it, but it is an individual plan, not general guidelines that everyone has to follow.

Dave Staples, Egg Producer
Lake Mills, Wisconsin

Benefits of an EMS

- ✓ Improves environmental performance
- ✓ Improves regulatory compliance
- ✓ Protects property value
- ✓ Improves neighbor and community relations
- ✓ Reduces livestock health risks
- ✓ Provides documentation of stewardship efforts
- ✓ Improves management
- ✓ Protects well being of family and employees

AN EMS HELPS ESTABLISH ENVIRONMENTAL CREDIBILITY:

We need to step up and develop a system in agriculture that provides us with environmental credibility. An EMS provides that vehicle and labels us as proactive.


Chuck Stokes, Hog Farmer
Green County, North Carolina

Farm and Home Environmental Management Programs

Room 303 Hiram Smith Hall
1545 Observatory Drive, Madison, WI 53706
Phone: 608-262-0024, FAX: 608-265-2775
Website: WWW.UWEX.EDU/AGEMS

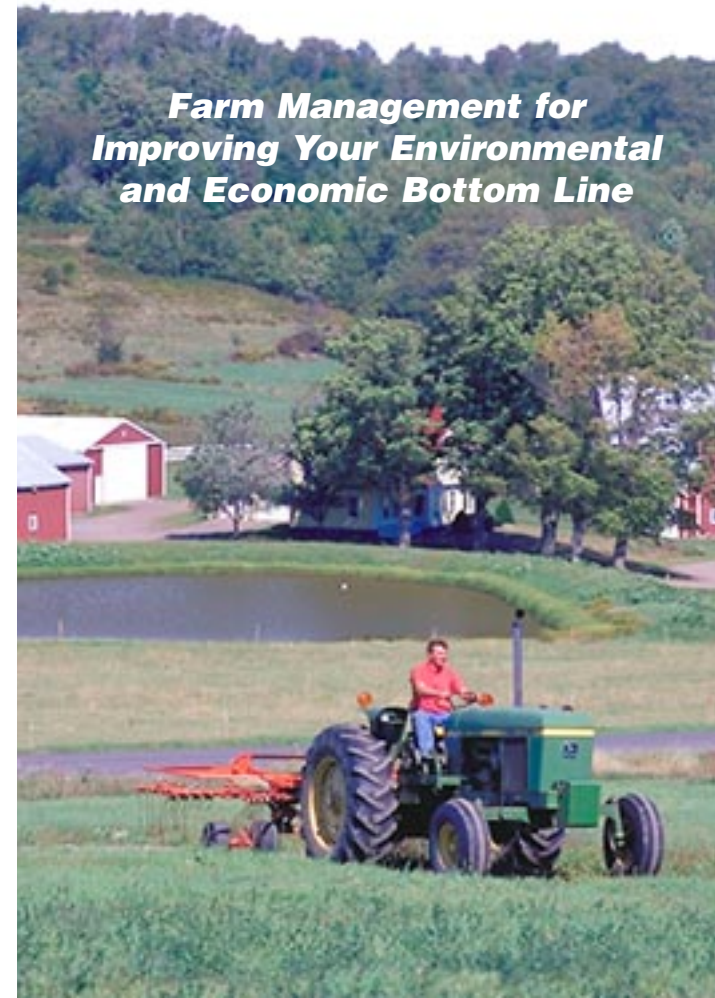
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AGRICULTURAL ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

Farm Management for Improving Your Environmental and Economic Bottom Line



What Is an EMS?

The Environmental Management System or EMS is a flexible, voluntary process that helps producers integrate environmental considerations into their production decisions. An EMS assists producers in assessing and prioritizing the environmental management considerations of their operations, and in planning and making changes needed to reach environmental and economic goals.

An EMS provides a vehicle for making continual improvements, meeting regulatory requirements and demonstrating good environmental stewardship.

This management process doesn't require re-inventing the wheel — it builds off of existing management systems, such as manure and pest management plans and comprehensive nutrient management plans.

AN EMS BUILDS ON SYSTEMS ALREADY IN PLACE:

By using the EMS system I think we can work with the agencies and consultants we've used traditionally to identify the strengths and weaknesses of our operations.

John Fessenden, Dairy Farmer
King Ferry, New York

How Does an EMS Work?

An EMS works on a simple “Plan, Implement, Check and Improve” framework. It puts the farmer in the lead for designing the management process that identifies and addresses environmental needs on his or her farm.

1. Farm Environmental Policy Statement. An EMS supports a producer in stating their environmental policy related to pollution prevention, continual improvement, and compliance with regulations.

2. Plan. A step-by-step planning process assesses current environmental performance, identifies environmental risks and evaluates options for improvement. The plan describes who will do what, when and how, and sets up a system of checks.

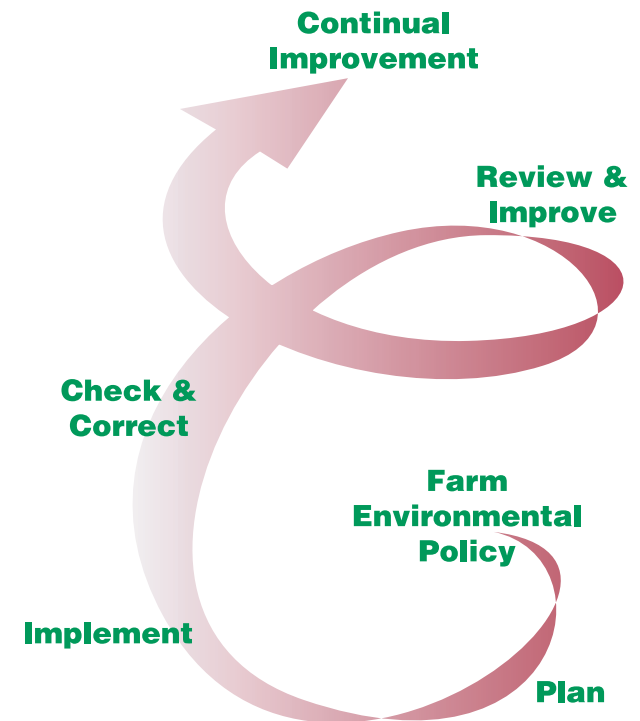
3. Implement. Putting the plan into action means incorporating EMS commitments and procedures into day-to-day operations.

4. Check & Correct. Regular checks and measurements support taking corrective actions that prevent problems from getting serious. Record-keeping provides proof that the plan is being implemented.

5. Review and Improve Plan. Periodic review tells you your environmental management system is on track. An annual review makes sure your policy, plan, procedures, practices and records will continue to serve you well. The results also tell you where additional modifications are needed. An independent third party assessment may also be considered for a fresh perspective and to provide credibility.

What Is Different About an EMS?

Each producer decides on the pace, scope and priority of changes to be made. An EMS expresses a producer's commitment to the long-term productivity of a farm — its financial health as well as the condition of the soil, water and air. An EMS can also address the most important bottom line — the health, well-being and quality of life for each farm family and farm community.



Continual Improvement. An EMS is a continual process of planning, implementing, checking and improving. The bottom line of the EMS is that producers validate their current good stewardship, and build from that base to become even better managers.