



Master **FARMER**

U of A
UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS
DIVISION OF AGRICULTURE
Cooperative Extension Service

Arkansas Master Farmer

- Over the past three decades, society has applied increasing pressure on all sectors of society to protect the quality of water in our lakes and streams.
- Agriculture, a largely unregulated industry in terms of water quality, has come under increased scrutiny with attention turning from point to non-point source pollution (NPS).
- This has led to increased state and federal environmental legislation especially for confined animal agriculture.
- The swiftness of this legislation has caught many agricultural producers off guard and confused on how to deal with these issues.
- This is especially true in environmentally unregulated sectors of agriculture.

Arkansas Master Farmer Who Wants It?

- Producer Groups
- Advocacy Groups such as the Arkansas Association Conservation Districts (AACD)
- Individual Producers



Arkansas Master Farmer

What Will It Provide

- Environmental Legislation Information
- State Water Quality Issues Information
- Best Management Practices (BMPS) to Mitigate NPS Pollution
- Incentive Programs for Installing BMPs.



Master Farmer and Extension/Advantages

- Provides a marketing tool for our environmental education programs
- Provides recognition as the organization of choice to help Agriculture address environmental issues through education
- Equips our Agents to better deliver education on environmental issues
- Allows us to be proactive rather than reactive
- Provide a unified, coordinated message from the Division of Agriculture on environmental issues.

Master Farmer and Extension/Challenges

- Environmental issues are dynamic, vary within and between watersheds, and solutions may be specific to management units such as individual fields or farms.
- Effective implementation will require dedication and delivery at all levels in Extension
- Environmental education will have to be incorporated into existing production programs
- Funding will need to be secured to continue the program

Master Farmer and Extension/Challenges

- We need better, more economical Best Management Practices that farmers can embrace
- We need better incentives for producers as well as incentives that have greater impact for producers
- Ensure that producers don't perceive our effort as "selling out" to regulatory programs
- Implementing the program on a watershed basis where Counties cooperate

Arkansas Master Farmer

How Will It Be Presented?

- A Modular Approach.
- Each Module Covers Independent Sections.
- The Program Can Be Presented in a Way That Fits Each Producer Groups Individual Needs.

Arkansas Master Farmer Modules

- There are Ten Modules in the Arkansas Master Farmer Program.
- These Modules are Targeted at the Six Commodity Groups in the State.



Arkansas Master Farmer Modules

- **Environmental Issues Facing Agriculture**
- **Environmental Issues On The Farm**
- **Watershed Issues in Arkansas**
- **Environmental Issues On Confined Animal Operations**
- **Environmental Issues On Row Crop Operations**

Arkansas Master Farmer Modules

- **Environmental Issues On Timber Operations**
- **Private Pesticide Applicator Certification**
- **Private Nutrient Applicator Certification**
- **Regulation 5 Certification**
- **Bio-Security for Agriculture/ National Animal and Premises ID Program**

Who Will Help Us in the Master Farmer Program

- ADEQ
- ASWCC
- NRCS
- AACD
- Arkansas Game and Fish Commission
- Arkansas Farm Bureau
- Arkansas Poultry Federation

Who Will Help Us in the Master Farmer Program

- Arkansas Cattlemen Association
- Arkansas Dairy Cooperative Association
- Dairy Farmers of America
- All Poultry Companies
- Arkansas Pork Producers
- All Swine Companies in Arkansas



Who Will Help Us in the Master Farmer Program

- All row crop groups
- Implement dealers
- Feed companies or cooperatives
- Lending Groups



Master Farmer and Producers/Advantages

- Will provide a single training that will help producers meet all certification requirements (i.e nutrient application, private pesticide application, etc.) at one time
- Training is built on modules that can be selected to tailor to the individual needs of farmers
- Training has the potential to provide a comprehensive view of the issues, implementations, requirements, solutions, etc.

Master Farmer and Producers/Disadvantages

- May be little incentive for the typical producer to participate
- Will require a day to a day and a half to complete initial training
- Environmental issues are complex and effectiveness of corrective action difficult to measure in terms of impact to natural resource

The Future of the U of A Master Farmer

- The future is bright!!
- We hope to have many outside sources on board.
- These sources will bring new opportunities and incentives for the producers in Arkansas.

Hopes for the Future

- To have incentive programs in place that would give the producers financial incentives such as lower interest rates on farm loans and lower insurance rates.
- That as a result of being part of the program our producers may be able to market their products for a higher price.

Hopes for the Future

- To have a Master Farmer pilot project in each district of the state by 2006.
- To have a complete marketable product by our introduction date of January 2007

The End....QUESTION?

