



COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
STATE CONSERVATION COMMISSION

DATE: September 13, 2016

TO: Members
Agricultural Advisory Board

FROM: Frank X. Schneider
Director, Nutrient and Odor Management Programs

SUBJECT: Standard Animal Weights Update

SCC Staff would like to brief the AAB on possible changes to the Standard Animal Weights that are utilized in the Act 38 Nutrient Management Program.

The current animal weights that are used in the Act 38 Nutrient Management Plan (NMP) program were developed in 2010. The original animal weights were published in 1997 for Act 6. In 2007, a revision was made for Act 38. In 2010, the weights were again revised to better reflect current Pennsylvania agriculture.

Staff has received many requests from certified NMP writers indicating that the average weights and grouping of different production cycles is not current with the current trend in Pennsylvania Agriculture. Specifically, Penn State swine experts inquired about updating the swine numbers and NMP specialists that work in the duck industry indicated that the duck numbers and groupings were not reflective of the industry.

Based on those requests, staff and Penn State Cooperative Extension (PSU) felt it was best to review and update all animal species and groupings to current Pennsylvania Industry standards and representative of what actually exists in Pennsylvania.

83.262 (a) (1) (i) of the Act 38 regulations state:

Compute the animal weight for the agricultural operation by multiplying the average number of animals on the agricultural operation by the standard animal weight used by the livestock industry in this Commonwealth. The standard weights contained in guidance published by the Commission may be used to meet this requirement. Other animal weights may be used in place of those in the Commission guidance, if there is sufficient documentation to support their use. For those animal types not included in the Commission guidance, the average animal weight for the operation shall be used for this calculation, taking into account, if applicable, the range of animal weights throughout the time the animals are on the operation.

Staff and PSU completed a review of the standard animal weights. Significant changes have occurred for certain species.

Please note that any changes made to the standard animal weights, which are needed to be more reflective of Pennsylvania Agriculture, could have ripple effects that include:

1. Addition of newly identified Concentrated Animal Operations (CAOs).
2. Addition of new identified Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs).
3. Deletion of some existing Concentrated Animal Operations (CAOs).
4. Deletion of some existing Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs).

Additionally, staff will need to contemplate and make recommendations to the SCC on the following:

1. When will the changes become effective?
2. How will the new animal weights be brought into existing NMPs?
3. How will the new animal weights be brought into existing CAO / CAFO calculations that show someone is not a CAO / CAFO?
4. How will these new weights and agronomy facts 54 be “rolled out”?

It is staff’s intention to make the draft updated standard animal weights available for a 60 day public comment period. It is anticipated that staff will ask for an action from the SCC on the new Standard Animal Weights sometime in 2017, after all public comments are received and a thorough review of those comments by staff and PSU species experts.