

Nutrient Management Standard Animal Weights and Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs)

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

July 2018

What are Standard Animal Weights?

Standard Animal Weights are used in the Nutrient Management Planning process on farms that do not have their own documented animal weights to determine the Animal Equivalent Units (AEUs) for each type of animal. $AEUs = (\text{average number of animals on the operation} \times \frac{\text{animal weight}}{1000}) \times (\text{number of days the animals are on the operation per year} / 365)$.

If the farmer does not have records of actual weights of the animals on his or her operation, the Standard Animal Weights identified in [Agronomy Facts 54](#) must be used.

When were the new Standard Animal Weights approved?

On May 9, 2017, the State Conservation Commission (SCC) approved new Standard Animal Weights and animal groupings. The SCC published these new Standard Animal Weights and animal groupings table in the Pennsylvania Bulletin on June 3, 2017. The Pennsylvania Bulletin Notice can be found [here](#).

When do the new Standard Animal Weights take effect?

The new Standard Animal Weights will take effect on October 1, 2019, which is the beginning of Crop Year 2020.

How do the new Standard Animal Weights compare with the previous weights?

The original Standard Animal Weights were published in 1997 for Act 6. Since then, there have been three more revisions – in 2007, 2010 and most recently, in 2017. The weights were revised to reflect trends in Pennsylvania agriculture. Generally, the new standard animal weights are higher than the previous weights. The table for the new Standard Animal Weights is found in [Agronomy Facts 54](#) published in 2017.

My operation is already regulated as a CAFO. What do I need to do?

For existing CAFOs, the new weights will be brought into the Nutrient Management Plan (NMP) when the NMP is due to be amended. This amendment may be at the triennial review or sooner, if one of the amendment criteria are met before the triennial review. Note that the obligation requiring a plan amendment due to a 10% increase in AEUs, relates to an expansion (addition) of animals and is not triggered merely by the new standard animal weights.

My operation isn't currently defined as a CAFO, but I think this might change with the new standard animal weights. What do I need to do?

1. **First, contact a certified Commercial Nutrient Management Specialist.** This professional will help you determine whether your operation will be defined as a CAFO.

- You can find a certified specialist on the PAPlants website [here](#), click on the Nutrient Management Tab, and scroll to “NM Certified Specialist Search.”
2. If your operation is defined as a CAFO, you’ll need to **submit an administratively complete CAFO permit application** to the DEP Southcentral Regional Office no later than April 1, 2019.
 3. To be administratively complete, **your CAFO permit application must include a Nutrient Management Plan that’s been approved by your county conservation district or the State Conservation Commission.**
 - Both are due to the DEP Southcentral Region by April 1, 2019.
 - Work with your certified Nutrient Management Specialist to develop the plan and permit application.
 - We strongly recommend that you **submit your nutrient management plan to your county conservation district office by October 1, 2018**, to ensure final approval by April 1, 2019.
 - It typically takes three months from plan submission to approval, but operators who are new to this process may need more time to ensure their plan is complete and technically adequate.
 - This plan should cover crop years 2020-2022 (October 1, 2019–September 30, 2022).

If I have any questions, who should I contact?

For more information, go to www.dep.pa.gov, Keyword: CAFO.

You may also contact your local [county conservation district](#), a Certified Nutrient Management Specialist, or DEP at the following address: Operations Division, Bureau of Clean Water, P.O. Box 8774, Harrisburg, PA 17105-8774, or telephone at (717) 787-6744.