

Amish Outreach

Clinton County Conservation
District

Sarah Ogden

The background of the slide is a solid blue color. In the lower right quadrant, there are several faint, concentric white circles that resemble ripples in water, creating a subtle decorative pattern.


Understanding the Amish

- Sects vary from state to state and county to county
- Each sect is led by one or more bishops
- Bishops set the community rules
- Rules define community actions

Clinton County Amish

- Make up a majority of the farmer base
- Growing community
- Two groups in two valleys:
 - Sugar Valley
 - Nittany Valley

Water Quality Issues

- High quality streams
 - Karst topography
 - Increased sediment loading
 - Increased nutrient loading
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- The background of the slide features a blue gradient with several faint, concentric circular ripples in the lower right quadrant, suggesting water or raindrops.

Nutrient Management Issues

- More farms + smaller acreage
- Increase in concentrated animal operations
- Increase in rural residential population

What did we do?

- Sugar Valley Ag Forum
 - Open invitation to all valley farmers
 - Focused on Amish farmers
 - Invited select agency speakers
 - Discussed ag law, NM, Conservation plans
 - Encouraged farmer to farmer discussion
 - Shared a meal

How did we do it?

- Relationship building
- Contact with the bishops
- Great NRCS partnership
- “Native sons”
- Soil & manure sampling
- No-till drill

Outcomes

- Increased contact with the Amish community
- Increased sign-ups for conservation plans
- Increased awareness of NM issues
- Increased interest in further dialogue

Remember

- Take the time to visit
- Use language they understand
- Information travels quickly!