

What Can and Should Be Done to Protect Water Quality; the Practical Reality of Regulations; and Innovative Approaches by Communities and Industry to Address Water Quality Issues Outside the Regulatory Framework.

Agriculture



Water Quality Stewardship

- “The earth is the Lord’s, and all it contains, the world and those who dwell in it.”

Psalms 24:1

Everyone is responsible for water quality protection. Everything should be done to meet reasonable water quality objectives.



Practical Reality of Regulations

- In order to meet the public demand for more and varied products, agriculture must use water, air, and soil resources.
- Regulations must be reasonable and consider local, regional, and state conditions, as well as optimizing the use of technical resources to the maximum extent possible.
- Proposed regulations should not create barriers to success or pit stakeholders against each other. Regulations should not direct funding to enforcement in lieu of producer assistance.



Management as a Resource vs. Regulation as a Waste

- Management as a resource promotes and encourages optimum beneficial reuse with all stakeholders working together to assure that best management practices and innovative approaches are fully developed based on specific local, regional, and state conditions. It does not assume that one size fits all. It does not assume that “big is bad”.
- Regulation as a waste discourages stakeholder participation by creating legal barriers that jeopardize the beneficial reuse of a valuable resource.



Actions Outside of Regulatory Framework

- Voluntary cooperation with planning and management groups
 - Full activity disclosure
 - Funding assistance
 - Accountability acceptance
- Innovative environmental management approaches
 - Openness to change
 - Technology awareness and transfer



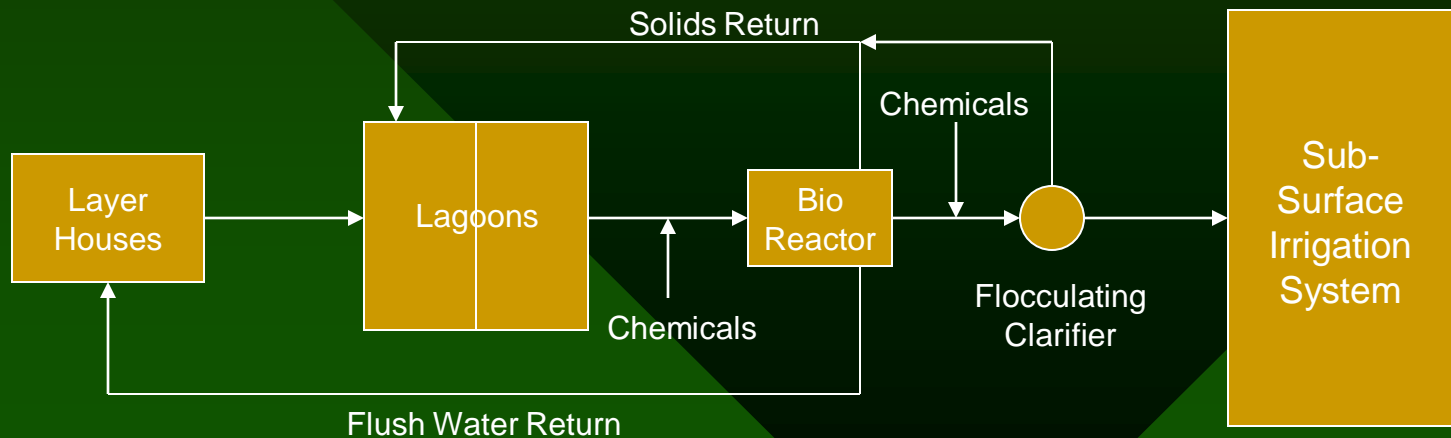
Regional Water District and Poultry Industry Joint Agreement for Water Quality Protection in the Cypress Basin

- Agreement to cooperate with in mapping, monitoring, accessing, and reacting to the impacts of poultry production in the basin.
- Development of a Litter Data Base Management Program to track litter generation and use activities in the basin.
- Voluntary funding of CRP and TMDL activities such as sampling, equipment purchase, etc.
- Quarterly reporting of activities in the basin.
- Water District Inspection Rights



Commercial Layer Hen Facility Environmental Management Alternative

- Existing system utilizes flush system with lagoons and surface application of water from lagoons to adjacent land.
- Alternative being considered will provide biological nutrient removal and chemical nutrient removal, with subsurface drip irrigation to eliminate potential for surface water impacts.



Summary

- Water quality protection is the responsibility of everyone who uses water.
- Agriculture can meet the public's demand for more and varied products while at the same time meeting reasonable water quality objectives. The two are not mutually exclusive.
- Overly stringent regulation of agriculture discourages stakeholder participation and beneficial reuse of valuable resources. The practical reality is that management as a resource rather than regulation as a waste is a better approach.
- Agriculture is willing to work outside of the regulatory framework to protect water quality. Voluntary approaches such as discussed and programs such as the Texas Soil and Water Conservation Board 503 Program give agricultural producers the opportunity to be successful without overly burdensome regulations.

