

Champlain Valley
Crops, Soil & Pasture Team

EXTENSION
CULTIVATING HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

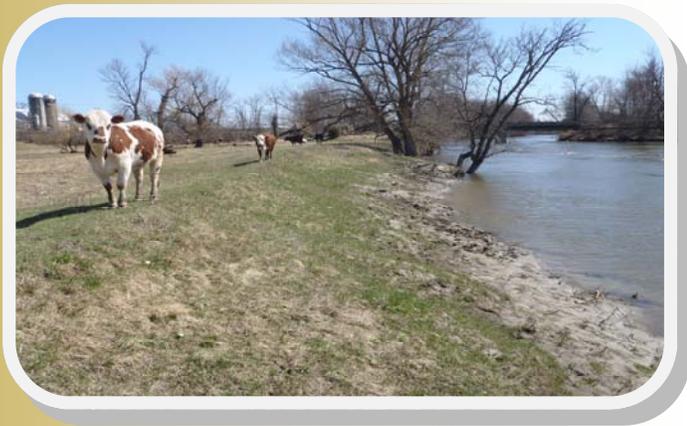


Agronomy and Conservation Assistance Program

Livestock Exclusion Annual Report

2012

Excluding livestock from direct access to streams will prevent stream bank degradation and reduce soil and nutrient runoff into surface waters of the state. The purpose of this project is to identify, develop and implement livestock exclusion projects on farms in the Lake Champlain Basin Watershed. Project practices include installation of permanent fencing appropriate for the livestock species along “blue-line” streams, improved stream crossing where required and development of water source and



Beef cattle on the Otter Creek, before fence exclusion.



Alternative water provided with animal powered nose pump.



After project completion, beef cattle fenced out of Otter Creek.

distribution lines where clean water is not readily available. Funding for each project is limited to 90% of the actual costs of the practices implemented; including fence installation cost, up to \$3,000 per stream crossing project and up to \$7,000 for livestock water system.



The farmers contribute a portion of the project cost and are required to maintain implemented practices for a minimum of ten years. Outreach professionals work with the farmers to design a project that meets the goals of reducing soil and nutrient loading into streams and provide quality assurance for project design and installation.

In 2012, fourteen farm livestock exclusion projects in Addison, Rutland and Chittenden counties have been identified and evaluated by Agronomy Outreach staff in Middlebury. Eight of those projects have been fully planned and completed or are currently being installed. Six additional farms were visited and preliminary plans developed for livestock exclusion, but the landowners declined assistance or were not funded due to low pri-

Dairy heifer paddock with blue line stream as drinking water source., and fence exclusion under construction.

ority or lack of “Blue Line” stream definition.

As a result of on-farm technical assistance by Agronomy Outreach Professionals in the Agronomy and Conservation Assistance Program (ACAP) a total of \$96,300 incentive payments to farmers have been committed to the identified projects. In 2012 installed livestock exclusion projects total 25,885 feet of fencing plus water system improvements and stream crossings now exclude 650 dairy and beef cows on 187 acres of pasture from degrading stream banks and reducing nutrient loss to stream surface water. In the South Lake watershed, Jennifer Alexander has planned livestock exclusion fencing



Frost free water station under construction, as seen from blue line stream water source.



Heifers fenced out of the blue line stream with alternative water provided with a new frost free water station.

projects for seven farms. When completed, those projects will stretch fence for 11,000 feet and exclude 230 dairy, 65 beef and 40 horses from access to streams.

Farmers in northern Vermont also see the value in this practice as a good way to keep animals from degrading stream banks and keeping animals out of our streams and rivers. In 2012, we did not directly use UVM money for installation of livestock exclusion projects in the northern portion of the watershed. Jeff Sanders teamed up with the Farmers Watershed Alliance and the Vermont Department of Agriculture and provided direct technical support on seven projects that are in progress or fully completed. There are currently several farmers potentially interested doing projects early next summer. I am sure with the

changes in regulations surrounding this practice that many more farmers will consider working with UVM to establish this practice. The average cost of a Livestock Exclusion project in our area is approximately \$7,800.00. This will typically fence out 40 to 80 head of cattle per project. As a result, completed projects encompassed installation of 22,163 feet of fencing to protect streams in Franklin County. One concern voiced by farmers is that the maintenance on these projects could be expensive over time depending on location of the fence and type of natural disasters which occur.

Innovative clean water solutions for livestock and environmental needs.

The farmer was able to use ACAP funds to put towards total project cost for gravity fed water system and fence exclusion for the pond and stream.



The berm of this farm pond failed, leaving no water source for livestock.



Pond berm was rebuilt with overflow and water intake structure for gravity fed water system.



Rehabilitated farm pond with overflow and water intake structure installed. Fence was built to exclude livestock from pond and stream.



Water lines installed under the new berm supply two frost hydrants. Clean water for livestock and the lake!

UVM Extension helps individuals and communities put research-based knowledge to work.



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The Vermont Agronomy and Conservation Assistance Program is funded through the Lake Champlain Basin Program and the Agency of Natural Resources with money secured by U.S. Senator Patrick Leahy and his staff from the Great Lakes Fisheries Commission. The project enhances work with farms that has been on-going with UVM Extension Agronomy Programs in the Champlain Valley, the Northwest Crops and Soils Program and the Southern Vermont Nutrient Management Program.



Vermont Agency of Natural Resources



Where to Find Us

Would you like to learn more about the assistance we provide, read one of our newsletters or find us on Facebook, call one of our team members, or stop by our office??

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