



## Right to Farm Biosolids

**PROGRAM MANAGER:** Michael Wozniak | 517-284-5618 | [WozniakM1@michigan.gov](mailto:WozniakM1@michigan.gov)  
 Program Coordinator - Steve Mahoney | 517-930-2966 | [MahoneyS@michigan.gov](mailto:MahoneyS@michigan.gov)

Biosolids are nutrient-rich organic materials resulting from the controlled treatment of sewage sludge. Because of that treatment, biosolids can be safely recycled and applied to farm fields for crop production as fertilizers. While regulated by the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE), the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development provides education and technical assistance to farmers, locally elected officials, and other stakeholders on the use of biosolids as fertilizer for crop production.

### IMPACT FOR MICHIGAN:

The land application of biosolids at agronomic rates saves Michigan farmers more than \$10 million each year in fertilizer costs. It also reduces municipal sewage treatment waste disposal costs by \$7.9 million each year.

### 2021 ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- 86,000 dry tons of biosolids were applied over farmland, with a fertilizer value of \$15.5 million.
- Planned and attended the 2021 Michigan Biosolids Virtual Conference.
- Conducted a demonstration plot and had a display at the 2021 Agro Expo.
- Published four Quarterly *Amendments* Newsletters.
- Published six *Biosolids 101* information sheets.

## MEASURING SUCCESS:

| Metric   | 2017    | 2018   | 2019   | 2020   | 2021    |
|--|---------|--------|--------|--------|---------|
| Biosolids applied (dry tons)   | 120,000 | 65,000 | 64,000 | 68,000 | 86,000  |
| Biosolids application area (est. acres)  | 29,550  | 21,500 | 21,300 | 26,000 | 33,000  |
| Nitrogen used as fertilizer (est. tons)  | 4,800   | 2,780  | 2,560  | 3,750  | 4,760   |
| Phosphorus used as fertilizer (est. tons P <sub>2</sub> O <sub>5</sub> )             | 6,900   | 3,220  | 3,170  | 2,040  | 2,590   |
| Potassium used as fertilizer (est. tons K <sub>2</sub> O)                            | 600     | 282    | 278    | 200    | 250     |
| Farm value as fertilizer (approx. N-P <sub>2</sub> O <sub>5</sub> -K <sub>2</sub> O) | \$15M   | \$8.5M | \$6.4M | \$7.0M | \$15.5M |
| Biosolids Conference Participants  | 0*      | 105    | 155    | 165    | 112     |

\*No conference in 2017

## 2022 PROGRAM GOALS:

- Provide education and information to conservation district technicians on the benefits of biosolids. Technicians can then provide education and targeted technical assistance to farmers and local officials in their districts.
- Participate in Michigan Water Environment Association's (MWEA) biosolids committee meetings, activities, and the biosolids conference subcommittee to plan the 2022 Michigan Biosolids Conference.
- Display Biosolids Education materials at the Michigan Townships Association Annual Conference, Agro Expo, and the Michigan Association of Conservation Districts summer and winter conferences.
- Work with AgroLiquid staff to establish and maintain a biosolids demonstration plot.
- Work with Michigan State University Extension, MWEA, EGLE, and Michigan Farm Bureau to promote the beneficial use of biosolids.
- Develop new educational materials.

## KEY STAKEHOLDERS

- Michigan Water Environment Association
- EGLE
- Michigan Farm Bureau
- MSU Extension
- Michigan Townships Associations
- Conservation districts
- Local crop producers

## LEGAL AUTHORITY:

- Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act, PA 451 of 1994, Part 24 Rules and Part 31, as amended

