

Water Quality Protection Initiatives in the Alberta Agricultural Operation Practices Act

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Manure handling and storage associated with confined feeding operations have the potential to impact groundwater quality. Potential pollutants include organic matter, nitrogen, phosphorous and to a lesser extent pathogens, pesticides and hormones. Fortunately, much of Alberta is covered by low hydraulic conductivity glacial till deposits that tend to retard the downward movement of contaminated water.

The *Agricultural Operations and Practices Act* (AOPA) falls under Alberta Agriculture and Food and is administered by the Natural Resources Conservation Board. A primary objective of AOPA is to regulate the impacts of manure storage and handling on water quality. An overview of technical standards in AOPA aimed at water protection is presented including an update on the development of an environmental risk screening tool to assess environmental risk at confined feeding operations and manure storage facilities.

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Peter joined Alberta Agriculture in 1982 with the Resource Economics Branch where he worked on the economic analysis of various agriculture initiatives including irrigation expansion and rehabilitation, reclaiming solonchic soils and other resource related issues. From 1991 to 1994 Peter was heavily involved with implementing the GRIP program in Alberta. The primary focus was on calculating premium rates and developing price series for insured crops. He also worked with the Agriculture Financial Services Corporation for several years focussing on crop insurance issues and the first stages of a new private sector reinsurance arrangement for Alberta. Peter was the Director of Agricultural Research Division with Alberta Agriculture for a number of years where he managed cooperative research programs including greenhouse work in Brooks and barley breeding in Lacombe. In May of 2006, Peter joined the NRCB as the Chief Executive Officer.

Peter has a BSc. Agricultural Economics, University of Alberta, 1982, a MSc. Agricultural Economics, University of Alberta, 1990. and a MSc. Thesis, Fixed Cost Compensation in Farmland Expropriation, 1990.