

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6315

As of January 18, 2000

Title: An act relating to dairy nutrient management.

Brief Description: Clarifying dairy nutrient management standards.

Sponsors: Senators Rasmussen, Morton, Stevens and Swecker.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Agriculture & Rural Economic Development: 1/19/2000.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & RURAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Staff: David Johnson (786-7754)

Background: The Dairy Nutrient Management Program regulates discharges to state waters from dairy farms. It was enhanced in 1998 to include specific goals and schedules, as well as penalties for noncompliance by set deadlines.

Some of the standards used in establishing Dairy Nutrient Management Plans (DNMP) are taken from the federal Natural Resource Conservation Service. Some of the available federal funds for the program require compliance with these federal requirements.

Since the program was enacted in 1998, some federal requirements have changed. This has created a difficult situation for those trying to complete their DNMPs by the deadlines set in statute.

In 1999 the Dairy Nutrient Management Task Force was created to assist the implementation of the program. The task force has reported to the Legislature that DNMPs are required to comply with the requirements in place when the program was enacted. It has also reported that compliance with changing requirements is an important goal and new requirements ought to be considered and phased in over time.

Summary of Bill: Findings are made that the dairy nutrient management standards in place when the current dairy nutrient management program was enacted were, and continue to be, rigorous and appropriate. Constantly changing requirements create uncertainty and drain resources unnecessarily. At the same time there should be a method to incorporate new dairy nutrient management standards.

To be approved, DNMPs must meet the requirements that existed on July 1, 1998. The State Conservation Commission may, after public hearing and comment, adopt new requirements for DNMPs from the Natural Resource Conservation Service. The new requirements become mandatory after a five-year phase-in period.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.