



## PROGRESS REPORT

PROJECT TITLE: University of Minnesota Water Quality Education, Nitrogen Smart Online, Advancing Nitrogen Smart

PROJECT NUMBER:

REPORTING PERIOD: April 2024 – June 2024

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: Mike Schmitt, Brad Carlson

ORGANIZATION: University of Minnesota Extension

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1.) PROJECT ACTIVITIES COMPLETED DURING THE REPORTING PERIOD. (*Describe project progress specific to goals, objectives, and deliverables identified in the project workplan.*)

### Nitrogen Smart activities

- Attendee info for 2024 in-person programs entered into master attendee database
- Met with key individuals regarding the expansion to digital delivery
  - Jack Wilcox is our assigned communications professional
    - This was deemed the best immediate solution as opposed to hiring a new staff person
    - As an experienced staff member, there was no need for orientation or “getting up to speed”
  - Plan is to offer an “Advancing Nitrogen Smart” podcast every two weeks
    - Podcasts will be interaction between Dan Kaiser and Brad Carlson, with the possibility of adding other individuals in the future
    - Podcasts will derive from a segment of approximately 10 – 15 slides from an existing Nitrogen Smart curriculum
    - A master cut sheet from the PowerPoints is being maintained in order to not duplicate topics in the future
    - Delivery of podcasts will mimic those currently offered by the Nutrient Management group, but maintain separate branding
  - Short (approximately one minute) “Nitrogen Nugget” videos will be offered approximately twice a week
    - Videos will derive from a single fact delivered in the Nitrogen Smart program
    - Primary delivery of Nitrogen Nugget videos will be via Facebook, YouTube and X

- Dan Kaiser and Brad Carlson will be featured in the videos with the possibility of adding others in the future
- A brief introductory podcast and five episodes have been recorded with two more scheduled for Monday, July 1
  - Total listens from the U of M page (listens from other platforms are not able to be obtained):
    - Introduction – 234
    - Placement – 819
    - Statewide BMPs – 204
    - Carryover N – 269
    - Sidedressing – 148 (released two days prior to obtaining data)
    - **Total – 1674**
    - Next podcast on heat units and the water budget is set to be released on July 8
- Twenty videos were recorded on campus with three additional ones following at the SROC following the excessive rainfall
  - Topics and views are:
    - Sidedress is an important tool – 804
    - How fast does nitrate move through the soil – 3282
    - Volatilization loss of urea – 414
    - When should you take the PSNT – 632
    - Dealing with current conditions – 6020
    - Current nitrate levels in drainage at the SROC – 1206
    - Sidedressing in wet years – 808
    - **Total – 13,166**
- A recorded promo (Corn Grower sponsored) for the digital content was completed with Brownfield
- Deployment of online version of Adapting to Climate curriculum is still pending based on staff time

Other relevant work includes:

- Participating in state technical committee for development of revised Nutrient Reduction Strategy
- Wrote Nutrient Management blog on N loss at the end of May
- Emergency Nutrient Management podcast on supplemental N
- Recorded TV segment on current conditions for KTTC in Rochester
- Recorded video with Dan Lemke regarding N loss and current conditions
- Began work to organize efforts toward an Extension publication addressing the SE MN nitrate situation by meeting with Jeff Vetsch and Dan Kaiser and speaking with Fabian Fernandez and Carl Rosen. A further planning meeting for the outline and content is scheduled for the SROC on July 2.
- Assisted Extension Communications with preparation of an article regarding the Extension response to the SE MN nitrate situation with a visit to Gar-Lin dairy and an interview with Corn Growers president Dana Allen-Tully. This included a photo shoot. The article is set to appear in an upcoming issue of Source Magazine.

- Recorded media interviews regarding emergency supplemental N with the Linder Farm Network and Brownfield Ag Network
- Gave presentation on N status and rescue treatments at a field day in Carver County June 17
- Have answered more than a dozen phone calls from farmers and ag professionals regarding applying supplemental N

2.) IDENTIFY ANY SIGNIFICANT FINDINGS AND RESULTS OF THE PROJECT TO DATE.

The videos have been wildly successful. The podcasts have been successful too, however, we know it takes time to build an audience for podcasts.

3.) CHALLENGES ENCOUNTERED. *(Describe any challenges that you encountered related to project progress specific to goals, objectives, and deliverables identified in the project workplan.)*

The weather and soil conditions across most of Southern MN are causing us to adjust our deliver schedule. We are having to be very thoughtful to not include content that makes the product sound “dated” in the future.

4.) FINANCIAL INFORMATION *(Describe any budget challenges and provide specific reasons for deviations from the projected project spending.)*

There is nothing to report regarding this at this time

5.) EDUCATION AND OUTREACH ACTIVITIES. *(Describe any conferences, workshops, field days, etc. attended, number of contacts at each event, and/or publications developed to disseminate project results.)*

As the focus of these grants are education and outreach, this has already been covered in section 1.