

FDACS OFFICE OF AGRICULTURAL WATER POLICY –
BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

Agricultural Best Management Practices Development

The 1999 Florida Watershed Restoration Act (FWRA), section 403.067, Florida Statutes (F.S.), and other statutes authorize the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS) to develop and adopt best management practices (BMPs) to assist agriculture in reducing pollutant loads.

The FDACS Office of Agricultural Water Policy (OAWP) adopts and oversees the implementation of BMPs for “traditional” agricultural commodities (those other than silviculture or aquaculture). The OAWP has adopted BMPs for citrus, container nurseries, vegetables and row crops, and other commodities. By 2010, all the key commodities and specialty crops in the state should have FDACS-adopted BMPs. The table below summarizes the key OAWP-adopted BMPs, and those under development.

OFFICE OF AGRICULTURAL WATER POLICY BMPs

BMP INITIATIVES	RULE	INIT.VER.	AREA(S) OF APPLICATION	DEVELOPMENT/REVISION STATUS
<i>Ridge Citrus</i>	5E-1	✓	Lake Wales Citrus Ridge area; areas with well-drained soils	<i>Possible update/consolidation, contingent on discussions with industry</i>
<i>Indian River Area Citrus</i>	5M-2	✓	All or part of Volusia, Brevard, Indian River, St. Lucie, Martin, Okeechobee, Palm Beach	
<i>Citrus Groves in Peace River-Manasota Basin*</i>	5M-5	✓	All or part of Manatee, Sarasota, Hardee, DeSoto and Charlotte counties	
<i>Gulf Citrus</i>	5M-7	✓	All or parts of Hendry, Glades, Lee, Collier and Charlotte counties	
<i>Lake Okeechobee Watershed</i>	5M-3	✓	Lake Okeechobee watershed	<i>To be revised/expanded to incorporate statutory changes re Northern Everglades and Estuaries</i>
<i>Container Nurseries</i>	5M-6	✓	Statewide applicability	<i>To be revised to include in-ground nurseries and leatherleaf ferns</i>
<i>Vegetable/ Agronomic Crops</i>	5M-8	✓	Statewide applicability	<i>Under revision – to include forage grass</i>
<i>Sod Farms</i>	5M-9	✓	Water quality/quantity BMPs statewide	<i>Adopted 10/08</i>
<i>Land Application of Manure</i>	5M-10	N/A	Caloosahatchee and St. Lucie River watersheds	<i>Adoption target 12/08</i>
<i>Cow/Calf Operations (Statewide)</i>	TBD	TBD	Statewide applicability	<i>Currently at DEP for initial verification – adoption target early 2009</i>
<i>Equine/Horse Farms</i>	TBD	TBD	Statewide – on rule-defined operations w/greenbelt exemption	<i>Currently under development – Targeted for adoption 2009</i>
<i>Specialty Fruit and Nut</i>	TBD	TBD	Blueberries, pecans, etc.	<i>Currently under development – Targeted for adoption 2009</i>

* This manual is applicable to most of the soils types in Lake Jesup Basin citrus groves.

BMPs and OAWP staff contact information are located at <http://www.floridaagwaterpolicy.com>.

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OAWP Agricultural BMP Implementation

The OAWP employs field staff and contracts with service providers to work with producers to submit NOIs to implement the BMPs appropriate for their operations. These providers include the soil and water conservation districts, UF-IFAS, and resource development and conservation councils. OAWP contractors provide technical assistance and educational workshops, and, when funding is available, help implement cost-share programs.

OAWP BMP Implementation Assurance

Following up with agricultural producers provides information on producer understanding and implementation of the BMPs. It also helps identify where producers have gone out of production or made change to their operations. Follow up involves a combination of written surveys to all producers active in a BMP program, and on-farm visits to randomly selected sites.

Agricultural BMPs and Total Maximum Daily Loads

Under the FWRA, if agricultural nonpoint pollutant sources addressed by a BMAP do not either implement FDEP-verified, FDACS-adopted BMPs or conduct monitoring, they may be subject to enforcement by FDEP or the applicable water management district (Section 403.067(7)(b)2h, Florida Statutes).

FDACS works with agricultural producers and industry groups, environmental representatives, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP), the water management districts, the university system, and other interested parties to develop agricultural BMPs to address agricultural nonpoint source pollutants. The FWRA directs FDACS to re-evaluate and, if appropriate, revise BMPs, in consultation with FDEP, where water quality problems are demonstrated despite their appropriate implementation, operation, and maintenance.