

# AGRICULTURE & THE ENVIRONMENT

## WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT:

### EPA'S AGRICULTURE COMPLIANCE ASSISTANCE CENTER

**T**he Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), with the support of the Department of Agriculture (USDA), has developed a national Agriculture Compliance Assistance Center to provide a base for "one-stop shopping" for the agricultural community -- one place for the development of comprehensive, easy-to-understand information about approaches to compliance that are both environmentally protective and agriculturally sound. The Center, a program offered by EPA's Office of Compliance, seeks to increase compliance by helping the agricultural community identify flexible, commonsense ways to comply with the many environmental requirements that affect their business.

#### INFORMATION ACCESSIBILITY

The Ag Center will rely heavily on existing sources of agricultural information and established distribution mechanisms. The Center is designed so growers, livestock producers, other agribusinesses and agricultural information/education providers can access its resources easily -- through telephone, fax, mail, and EPA's EnviroSense computer bulletin board.

The Ag Center will be coordinated from EPA's Kansas City regional office. This will give it direct access to a large segment of the agricultural community and first-hand information

on factors that affect the compliance of producers and agribusinesses.

#### HOW THE CENTER WILL WORK WITH OTHER AGRICULTURAL AGENCIES

Although USDA and other agricultural agencies provide educational and technical information, assistance in complying with environmental requirements has not been as readily accessible. The new Center will work with USDA and other federal and state agencies to provide the agricultural community with a definitive source for environmental compliance information. The Center plans to provide information on a variety of topics, including:

- # pesticides,
- # animal waste management
- # non-point-source pollution,
- # agricultural worker protection,
- # groundwater, surface water, and drinking water protection, and
- # wetlands protection.

In addition, the Center will support regional and state regulatory agencies in their effort to provide compliance assistance to local agricultural communities.

The Ag Center plans to develop the following types of information:

< Plain-Language Guides -- User-friendly materials that consolidate information about compliance requirements, pollution prevention, and technical assistance resources for use by regional and state assistance and educational programs, trade associations, individual businesses, citizens, and local governments.

< Link Pollution Prevention and Compliance Goals -- Information related to agriculture to help reduce pollution and increase use of the latest pollution prevention technologies.

< Reduce Compliance Costs -- Identification of commonsense, flexible methods of reducing the costs of meeting environmental requirements, including identification of barriers to compliance.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION**

Contact: EPA's Agriculture Compliance Assistance Center, 726 Minnesota Avenue, Kansas City, KS, 66101.