

# Suggestions for clearing up farm ponds

BY UK EXTENSION SERVICE

During the spring and summer, we get a lot of questions at the extension office from pond owners about how to control unwanted aquatic plant and algae growth in their ponds.

Here are some ideas to help reduce the amount of these unwanted plants in your pond.

Whether constructing a new pond or renovating an old one, minimize shallow areas of less than 2.5 or 3 feet around the shoreline to prevent unwanted plant growth. Aquatic plant and algae typically establish first in these shallow areas before extending toward the center of the pond.

If you are installing a new pond, make sure it is located away from watershed runoff consisting of nutrients from fertilizers, manure and septic wastewater. These promote unwanted aquatic growth and may pose hazards to aquatic life.

If possible, construct a pond near a source of electricity. You may want to install electric surface aeration devices. You can install these in shallow ponds that are 10 feet or less in depth.

Deeper ponds may benefit from the installation of a

diffused aeration system. Air is pumped through hoses from a compressor on the pond bank to air stones located on the pond bottom.

Both surface aerator and diffused aeration systems help circulate pond nutrients and reduce stagnant water that often encourages plant or algae growth.

Adding agricultural limestone to ponds constructed in acidic soils will raise the pH of the bottom mud and free up phosphorus and other nutrients. These nutrients will encourage the development of beneficial plankton blooms and enhance fish growth.

Pond soils may be submitted for pH testing and liming requirements. Use the same nutrient amounts recommended for alfalfa fields. Total alkalinity of pond water may be tested, and samples ranging between 50 to 100 mg/L are good for fish growth.

Aquatic dyes can be added to impart color to the pond water and help reduce sunlight penetration to the pond bottom. This may help control plant or algae growth. Unfortunately, aquatic dyes are not effective in controlling unwanted growth in shallow water. Dyes may best be

added to a pond when water retention time is greatest, often in the middle summer and early fall.

Triploid grass carp are legal to stock in private Kentucky ponds. They will control soft-stemmed plants and branched algae that are easily digested. The fish contain an extra set of chromosomes which makes them unable to reproduce.

Grass carp 10 inches long or larger should be stocked into ponds containing adult largemouth bass to avoid predation. Grass carp grow quickly and should be restocked every few years as younger, smaller fish control vegetation better than larger fish. Adult fish can grow up to 20 pounds or more. They are powerful and can be dangerous to handle.

Both liquid and granular algaecides and herbicides are available to temporarily control unwanted aquatic plant and algae growth. Aquatic plants and algae must be correctly identified before these chemicals are applied. Follow all label recommendations and observe all application restrictions.

Source: Forrest Wynne, extension aquaculture specialist, Kentucky State University

# Ag Development Board approves projects

The Kentucky Agricultural Development Board approved \$533,249 for agricultural diversification and rural development projects across the commonwealth last Friday at its monthly board meeting.

"The Agricultural Development Board invests in projects that strengthen our ag community," Commissioner of Agriculture and Board Chair Jonathan Shell said. "These projects are helping to diversify our agricultural landscape and grow our economy, which is a benefit to all of Kentucky."

County and State Funded Projects

- Animal Care Veterinary Center, LLC was approved up to \$60,191 in state funds and \$12,038 in multi-county funds to purchase a truck and a vet box as part of the Large & Food Animal Veterinary Incentives Program. For more information, contact Jacob R. Feese at acvcdvm@gmail.com.
- Graves County Farm Bureau, Inc was approved up to \$5,000 in Graves County funds to purchase grain bin safety harnesses. For more information, contact David J. Cherry at j4grt@yahoo.com.
- Jarrod Cornett was approved up to \$3,750 in state funds for consultation fees as part of the Food Safety and Efficiency Incentives Program. For more information, contact Katelyn L. Fortney at

katiefortney81@gmail.com.

- Lowes Produce was approved up to \$127,797 in state funds to build a watermelon processing facility. For more information, contact Shea Lowe at lowefarms@gmail.com.
- Pennyryle Resource Conservation and Development Area, Inc was approved up to \$2,500 in Christian County funds for a community garden. For more information, contact Mark Cansler at turner1224@gmail.com.

**COUNTY PROGRAMS**

County Agricultural Incentives Program (CAIP)

CAIP provides Kentucky agricultural producers with cost-share assistance on practices to allow them to improve and diversify their current farm operations. CAIP covers a wide variety of agricultural enterprises in its 11 incentive areas, including, but not limited to, beef and dairy cattle; farm infrastructure, fencing, and water enhancement; equine; forage; goats and sheep; horticulture; poultry; swine; bees and honey; timber and technology, as well as energy efficiency and production; marketing; and value-added production.

Four CAIPs, totaling \$259,873, were approved by

the board in the following counties:

- Anderson (\$5,000) \*
- Carlisle (\$112,739)
- Lyon (\$60,000)
- Perry (\$82,134)

Deceased Farm Animal Removal (DAR)

The Deceased Farm Animal Removal Program serves as a measure to facilitate the coordination of environmentally sound and cost-effective disposal of deceased livestock for Kentucky producers.

Three DARs, totaling \$34,400, were approved by the board in the following counties:

- Marion (\$15,000)
- Mercer (\$15,000)
- Spencer (\$4,400)

**YOUTH AGRICULTURAL INCENTIVES PROGRAM (YAIP)**

YAIP encourages youth to engage in and explore agricultural opportunities.

Three YAIPs, totaling \$27,700, were approved by the board in the following counties:

- Caldwell (\$2,600) \*
- Mercer (\$20,000)
- Spencer (\$5,100)

All application periods and deadlines for CAIP and YAIP will be advertised locally.

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