

Building Innovative Industry-Producer Partnerships to Reduce Hypoxia in the Gulf of Mexico

Partners: Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Gulf of Mexico Program, plus public and private partners in Indiana, Minnesota, Missouri and Ohio

Project Description: In 2006, CTIC received a grant from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Gulf of Mexico Program to fund a project called “Building Innovative Industry-Producer Partnerships to Reduce Hypoxia in the Gulf of Mexico.” In this collaborative effort, CTIC and partners strive to bring innovative, effective approaches for addressing complex nutrient management challenges



directly to the local level. CTIC and partners aim to help ag communities improve nutrient use efficiency and increase nutrient management at the farm level, ultimately helping to decrease nutrient loads to the lower Mississippi River and reduce the size of the Gulf of Mexico hypoxic zone.

Activities: CTIC and a broad coalition of ag interests in the Missouri Bootheel held a workshop, for growers and their advisors, in March 2009 to showcase the latest nutrient management tools and technology. Future plans include two field days in late summer. The group is also developing a formal list of recommendations

to the Missouri USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, to improve technical assistance and availability of nutrient management resources for growers.

Partners in Minnesota reached consensus that the best approach would be to form a broad coalition of interested groups. The diverse coalition pools resources and information to work together on: developing consistent messages about nutrient management needs and practices in southeastern Minnesota, identifying and bringing the tools/practices necessary for improving nutrient management, and obtaining funding to support direct technical assistance to help farmers understand, adopt and maintain nutrient management practices.

Working in 14 counties within the Wabash Watershed (two in western Ohio and 12 in eastern Indiana), CTIC has facilitated the formation of a watershed stakeholder group to identify needs for nutrient management within the watershed, identify existing programs and assistance for meeting nutrient management needs, determine what additional tools are needed for success, and search for potential funding sources.

The project’s website, <http://www.conservationinformation.org/nutrientmanagement>, includes information on all three initiatives, as well as CTIC’s Upstream Heroes campaign, sponsored by The Nature Conservancy and Terra Industries.

For More Information: Contact Christa Martin-Jones, CTIC project director, at Tel: 317-508-2450 or Email: jones@conservationinformation.org

Get Involved: Each local effort is seeking stakeholders from the agricultural community to participate and contribute to the project’s success. If you can participate in any of the three local-level projects, contact CTIC for more information.