

## WSDCCRES-927-200201-RECPASS-AGR-MANURE STANDARD

### Ensure That All Manure Users Are Held to the Same Standard

**WHEREAS** groundwater in the Lower Yakima Valley has high nitrate levels that contaminate drinking water. “About a third of the Lower Yakima Valley uses private, unregulated wells for drinking water. Between 10 and 20% of these wells have nitrate concentrations that exceed the national and state drinking water standard.” (U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. 2012. Lower Yakima Valley Nitrate Study Fact Sheet.);

**WHEREAS** nitrate contamination in drinking water is a public health risk: “Exposure to excess nitrate can result in methemoglobinemia (blue-baby syndrome) in infants and susceptible individuals, which can lead to death in extreme cases.” (U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, “Relation Between Nitrate in Water Wells and Potential Sources in the Lower Yakima Valley, Washington”, EPA-910-R-13-004, 2013, p. 33.);

**WHEREAS** dairies are principally responsible for the elevated nitrate levels. “The Lower Yakima Valley is...plagued by high nitrate levels in drinking water that are closely associated with significant numbers of farm animals and large animal feeding operations.” (Washington State Department of Health, “Keeping of Animals”, 2018, p. 10.);

**WHEREAS** off-site field application of manure is one of several major vectors of nitrate contamination. “Due to the large amounts generated, manure from dairies often ends up being applied not only on-site but also on other farms, sometimes by that other farmer, and sometimes by a commercial applicator.” (Washington State Department of Agriculture, “Implementation of Nutrient Management Training Program for Farmers and Manure Management Program Review”, 2017, p. 9.);

**WHEREAS** there is lack of consistency in the regulation of off-site manure application and often absence of oversight. “Manure from dairies does not have to be managed to the same standard when exported off the dairy farm as it does when managed on the dairy farm... crop farms that use manure are not inspected.” (Washington State Department of Agriculture, “Implementation of Nutrient Management Training Program for Farmers and Manure Management Program Review”, 2017, pp. 8, 10.);

**WHEREAS** dairy nutrient management faces similar challenges in the Sumas-Blaine Aquifer in Whatcom County and in the lower Columbia Basin in Franklin County;

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that we, the Washington State Democratic Central Committee, support our state legislature and all relevant state agencies to ensure that all manure producers are required to report the destination of all manure production, including manure exported to third parties.

---

Submitted by the Ag and Rural Caucus to the WSDCC for consideration at its September 28, 2019 meeting in Yakima. (Date Submitted 8/26/2019)

Reconsidered at February 2, 2020 meeting in Vancouver

This Resolution was **PASSED** by the WSDCC on February 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2020