



## Farm•A•Syst

The Farmstead Assessment System, or *Farm•A•Syst*, gives you accurate, specific information about how structures such as your septic system or fuel tanks and activities such as pesticide storage or manure handling may affect the quality of your water. Some structures and practices have little risk of contaminating water, while others pose a high risk. Good management practices can reduce surface and ground-water pollution potential.

Some of the results from your evaluation will be reassuring. Some may encourage you to consider changes. Either way, you will have the information you need to do the best possible job of protecting and improving water quality.

The goal of *Farm•A•Syst* is to help farm families and rural residents assess and reduce risks affecting the quality of their water.

### How does Farm•A•Syst work?

- Twelve factsheets help you assess how effectively your farmstead structures and practices protect water quality.
- Each factsheet starts with a series of questions that ask you about structures and activities around your farmstead.
- Facts about each question explain how your farmstead practices may affect water quality.
- Best management practices to reduce potential pol-

lution sources are explained, modifications are suggested, and places to go for more information and help are listed.

Field practices also have the potential to contaminate water, but the *Farm•A•Syst* series is not designed to address these concerns. These factsheets focus on the potential effects of farmstead structures and practices on water quality.

### Farm•A•Syst Is A Three-Step Process

#### Step 1:

Use *SP484 C, Assessing Your Farmstead Site*, to determine how the soils and geology on your farmstead affect the potential for water pollution.

#### Step 2:

From the remaining factsheets, select those that deal with structures and activities on your own farmstead. Use them to assess how effectively your farmstead practices protect water quality. The other factsheets are:

- *Assessing Your Private Well*
- *Assessing Your Pesticide Storage and Handling*
- *Assessing Your Fertilizer Storage and Handling*
- *Assessing Your Petroleum Product Storage*
- *Assessing Your Hazardous-Waste Management*
- *Assessing Your Septic System*
- *Assessing Your Livestock Yard Management*
- *Assessing Your Livestock Manure Storage*
- *Assessing Your Poultry Litter Management and Carcass Disposal*
- *Assessing Your Milking-Center Wastewater Treatment*

### Step 3:

Use SP484 N, *Overall Farmstead Assessment*, to

- inventory the potential sources of contamination you identified
- identify changes that can be made to reduce pollution potential
- determine any changes that can be made *now*
- decide on initial steps to put your plan into action

Plan to spend about 15 to 30 minutes to complete each factsheet you select. The overall evaluation may take more time, as will following up on any of the sources of additional information.

*Farm•A•Syst* is an educational program entirely for your own use and benefit. It gives you general information and recommendations about your own farmstead. You and your family should be able to complete the factsheets yourself. This program is not intended to provide any agency, including Extension, with records of individual results.



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The University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture, U.S. Department of Agriculture,  
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Agricultural Extension Service

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