

Permitting and Regulatory

Situation Overview:

- A. *What was the process the farm went through to prepare for necessary permits?* Both our Transformation Team and our Center for Dairy Excellence (CDE) Profit Team discussed permits. Permits needed two years ago are different than permits needed today because the (local) Bradford County permitting landscape continues to change.
- B. *Please list the necessary permits needed for your modernization and technology project. Please also include the approval agency (DEP, County Conservation District, or Township), time to receive permit and cost of permits.* Our team leader advised us to budget \$7,500 for permits; we exceeded our budget, as outlined below:
- NPDES Permit (National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System)
Approved by the NRCS/DEP. Cost: \$2,500. We wrote three separate checks for this permit. We began the permitting process in June 2012 and were denied. We had to perform a perk test for drainage, and were approved in August 2012. Our permit arrived in September, in time for us to begin excavation. Engineering and perk tests added another \$6,000 to the cost for a total of \$8,500.
 - Building Permit
Issued by Spring Township. Cost was measured by the square footage of the barn. – ten cents/ square foot for a total cost of \$1,500. We also included this permit with our NPDES permit, because it was required that we prove the township reviewed our plans. We were code inspection exempt because it was an agriculture project. It was another 2 – 3 weeks before the permit went before the supervisors.

Total Project Permit Costs: \$10,000

Challenges and Opportunities:

- C. *Were there setbacks during the permitting process?* We didn't have as much knowledge about NPDES. We also were new to NRCS. In the past, we wouldn't have to worry about the new lagoon. This permit was needed because we were moving an acre or more of dirt
- D. *Which permit was the most challenging to secure?* NPDES, for the reasons noted earlier in the case study.
- E. *How did you resolve those challenges?* Ultimately, we didn't have any choice but to fund the needed perk test and spend the extra money to receive the permit. In the future, we would know to budget more money for necessary permits.

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F. *What resources or resource people were used in addressing those challenges?* Red Barn, our engineering consulting firm, was very helpful. They have applied for these type of permits for other clients and could handle the logistics.

Results:

G. *Was the local township supportive of the permitting process? Please explain.* Yes. Spring Township supervisors are supportive of agriculture and appreciate the dairy industry. They were very excited about a new dairy expansion in their township. Most of the supervisors we've known personally, and live within 5 – 10 miles of us.

