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2011 CLEAN WATER AWARD

Perdue Farms cares for environment, bottom line

Melissa Molaison,
environmental service manager

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CLEAN WATER AWARD

Perdue Farms poultry facility cares for environment, bottom line

Taking care of the Ocmulgee River and reducing chemical usage in wastewater operations earned Perdue Farms a Clean Water Award in Perry, Ga. BY GARY THORNTON

Perdue Farms' wastewater operation in Perry, Ga., has the feel of a nature preserve. The broiler processing complex is situated on 700 rural acres with abundant wildlife. Half of that acreage is set aside for wildlife habitat conservation. Alligators sun on the banks of the wastewater



Not really a nature park: Environmental Service Manager Melissa Molaison



Clean Water Award judges inspect sludge bulk conditioner on DAF feed pipe.

treats flow from the slaughter and processing of 312,000 broilers a day and the production of 314,000 pounds of cooked chicken in the further-processing plant. By the time the treated effluent flows into a stream that leads to Big Indian Creek, it is crystal-clear in appearance and environmentally superior to the ultimate receiving waters of the Ocmulgee River.

Wastewater technologies

The Perry complex was a beer brewery before being converted

to poultry processing in the 1990s, and the wastewater operation inherited abundant wastewater holding capacity from the brewing facility. Ample holding capacity adds flexibility to the wastewater treatment processes and redundancy in case of an upset in those processes.

Sludge conditioning

Environmental managers at Perry also employ the latest wastewater treatment technologies. In 2010, for example, the facility began using the Griswold Edge sludge bulk conditioner on the dissolved air flotation feed pipes. The system applies an electromagnetic charge to the flow to reduce sludge.

According to Environmental Service Manager Melissa Molaison, the system has reduced sludge output by an average of four to six loads per week and reduced coagulant polymer usage.

Not only does the system reduce the biological oxygen demand from the DAF flow, savings in sludge disposal and polymer coagulant range from \$2,000 to \$4,000 a week, she said.

Perdue Farms reduces wastewater chemicals with electromagnetic treatment
www.wattagnet.com/21077.html

PLC for polymer dosing

Installation of a PLC system to control polymer dosing has also cut chemical costs by about 20% due to improved efficiency and less waste. The PLC accepts input from the DAF flow meters and automatically adjusts polymer feed rates as the flow changes. The PLC is estimated to save over 2,000 man hours each year.

Environmental outreach

For Earth Day 2010, Perdue Farms donated \$2,000 to the Mile Branch River Park for improvements to the park facilities. The facility's environmental department also helped plan and organize the first annual Rivers Alive Houston County River Cleanup on the Ocmulgee River.

The wastewater operation at Perry only has the feel of a nature park. Guided tours for the public are not provided, but if tours were held people would come away with a very positive view of the industry's environmental management.

U.S. Poultry & Egg Association sponsors Clean Water Awards. ■