



May 24, 2024

Brad Gerrits  
Breeze Dairy Group LLC  
W6110 Aerotech Drive; Suite E  
Appleton, WI 54914

SUBJECT: Conditional Approval of RIDGE BREEZE DAIRY Nutrient Management Plan,  
WPDES Permit No. 0062928-04-1

Dear Brad Gerrits:

After completing a review of Ridge Breeze Dairy Nutrient Management Plan (NMP) the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (Department) is providing conditional approval that it is consistent with Nutrient Management Requirements in s. NR 243, Wis. Adm. Code. This part of your WPDES permit application is now ready for the public notice and comment process as required by Ch. 283 Stats.

Before applying manure onto approved fields each season, the Department recommends Ridge Breeze Dairy review the NMP with those individuals involved with manure applications to ensure all remain familiar with the approved manure spreading protocol, spreading maps, field and map verification, record keeping requirements, and all the conditions of this approval. Specifically, some fields in Ridge Breeze Dairy may have:

- Soils that may have bedrock or groundwater within 24 inches of surface,
- Multiple setback areas due to streams, conduits to streams, grassed waterways, wetlands or wells, and
- Evidence of possible soil erosion/flow channels. Note: road ditches or other man-made channels may be considered flow channels or conduits to navigable water and may be subject to a SWQMA and setback.

Reviewing the NMP and checking fields for these features and soil conditions prior to manure applications will help Ridge Breeze Dairy maintain compliance with their WPDES permit and Ch. NR 243 requirements.

#### FINDINGS OF FACT

The Department confirms that:

1. A current dairy herd size of 2431 animal units (1700 milking cows). A planned herd size of 9010 animal units (6200 milking & dry cows, 300 heifers, and 0 calves) by 2025.
2. Manure generation and spreading records indicate your herd will generate approximately 23,816,093 gallons of liquid manure and process wastewater and 17721 tons of solid manure in 2024 and 77,708,899 gallons of liquid manure and process wastewater and 1,000 tons of solid manure after the full expansion.
3. The use of application restriction options 1, 2 and 5 within surface water quality management areas.
4. The use of phosphorus delivery method P Index.
5. That Ridge Breeze Dairy currently has 7363 acres (89.7 owned and 7273.3 controlled through contracts, rental agreements or leases, or under manure agreements). **Ridge Breeze Dairy currently has 1,187.8 acres that are not compliant with soil testing requirements and therefore are prohibited from manure and process wastewater applications.** This leaves the farm with an estimated 5,976.8 spreadable acres.
6. That some fields included in the NMP are directly adjacent to or have high potential to deliver nutrients and sediment to Arkansas Creek, Eau Galle River, Plum Creek, Porcupine Creek (total phosphorus) and Missouri Creek (degraded habitat, sediment/total suspended solids).

7. That some fields included in the NMP are directly adjacent to or have high potential to deliver nutrients and sediment to outstanding/exceptional waters including Unnamed (WBIC 2058800), Unnamed (WBIC 2058900), Unnamed (WBIC 2059650), Unnamed (WBIC 2443200), Unnamed (WBIC 3000372), Arkansaw Creek, Big River, Cady Creek, Cave Creek, Eau Galle River, Rush River, Spring Creek, Little Trimbelle Creek, and Trimbelle River.
8. That the following fields included in the NMP are located within the well head protection area for the Ellsworth Waterworks Wellhead Protection Area: 04-10-036
9. That no fields are tiled.
10. That all fields will be checked for the following features prior to/during manure or process wastewater applications: soil areas with possible shallow groundwater (i.e., within 24 inches of surface) at the time of manure application; required setbacks associated with wells, navigable waters, conduits to navigable waters, grassed waterways, wetlands, possible soil erosion/flow channels.
11. That surface applications of manure will not be completed when precipitation capable of producing runoff is forecasted within 24 hours of the time of planned application.

### **CONDITIONAL NUTRIENT MANAGEMENT PLAN APPROVAL**

The Department hereby approves the 2024-2028 Ridge Breeze Dairy Nutrient Management Plan subject to the following conditions and the applicable requirements of Ch. NR 243, Wis. Adm. Code:

#### FIELD AND MANURE MANAGEMENT

1. Fields not included in the NMP and new fields shall not receive manure or process wastewater applications until they have been properly soil sampled, entered into Snap Plus, evaluated for their nutrient needs, and approved by the Department.
2. The following fields are prohibited from receiving applications of manure or process wastewater due to insufficient soil sampling and the use of a “default” soil test value for planning purposes:
 

• 04-02-076	• 04-08-019	• 04-16-003	• 04-16-009
• 04-02-085	• 04-08-021	• 04-16-004	• 04-16-010
• 04-04-012	• 04-08-022	• 04-16-005	• 04-16-011
• 04-04-014	• 04-08-025	• 04-16-006	• 04-16-012
• 04-08-006	• 04-16-001	• 04-16-007	
• 04-08-007	• 04-16-002	• 04-16-008	

If Ridge Breeze Dairy wishes to use these fields for applications of manure or process wastewater all necessary information shall be submitted to the Department prior to application to demonstrate compliance with NR 243 and other applicable codes. Written Department approval amending this condition approval must be received prior to application.

3. If existing fields yield a soil test results equal to or greater than 200 ppm P, those fields would be prohibited from receiving manure or process wastewater applications, unless you obtain Department approval in accordance with NR 243.14(5)(b)2., Wis. Adm. Code.
4. All liquid manure samples collected may be analyzed, at a minimum, for percent dry matter, total nitrogen, percent NH<sub>4</sub>-N, percent NO<sub>3</sub>-N, phosphorus, potassium, and sulfur.
5. If manure sample results have a dry matter (DM) content less than 2.0% and the percent ammonium (NH<sub>4</sub><sup>+</sup>) is greater than 75% of the total N, Ridge Breeze Dairy may use the following equation to adjust the first year available nitrogen when applications are injected or incorporated within 1 hour:

$$\text{First-Year Available N} = \text{NH}_4\text{-N} + [0.25 \times (\text{Total N} - \text{NH}_4\text{-N})]$$

6. Ridge Breeze Dairy shall record daily manure applications by using form 3200-123A. These forms shall be retained at the farm and provided to the department upon request.
7. Ridge Breeze Dairy shall annually submit a spreading report that summarizes the land application activities listed under NR 243.19(3)(c)5., Wis. Adm. Code by using form 3200-123.

#### WINTER SPREADING

8. Liquid manure applications during winter conditions, as defined by NR 243.14(7), Wis. Adm. Code, are prohibited with the exception of emergency applications.
9. The following field(s) are approved for winter spreading solid manure, emergency applications of liquid manure and frozen liquid manure:
 

• 04-02-085	• 04-03-002	• 04-04-002	• 04-04-010
• 04-02-093	• 04-03-024	• 04-04-006	• 04-04-011
• 04-02-094	• 04-04-001	• 04-04-008	
10. The following field(s) are denied for winter spreading solid manure, emergency applications of liquid manure and frozen liquid manure:
  - 04-02-090
11. Winter spreading of solid and liquid manure may not occur during the “high risk runoff period” pursuant to s. NR 243.14(6)(c) and NR 243.14(7)(c), respectively.
12. Winter applications of liquid manure shall only occur under emergency situations, after notifying the Department and receiving verbal approval.
13. Liquid applications shall be limited to 3,500 gallons per acre or 30 lbs. P per acre, whichever is less, on slopes 2-6% and 7,000 gallons per acre or 60 lbs. P per acre, whichever is less, on slopes 0-2%. Winter applications of solid manure shall be limited to 60 lbs. P per acre. Currently Ridge Breeze Dairy has 380.5 acres approved for applying liquid manure if an emergency situation arises. At the maximum approved winter spreading rates Ridge Breeze Dairy would be able to apply 2,663,500 gallons or **12.5 days** of manure and process wastewater production.

#### HEADLAND STACKING

14. The following sites are approved for non-winter and winter headland stacking:
 

• 04-02-046	• 04-03-018	• 04-03-032/3	• 04-03-024
• 04-02-085	• 04-03-020	• 04-03-002	

Please note: these headland stacking sites must meet the following conditions:

- Headland stacking sites may not be used for more than 8 months out of the year - may be used for any periods in the months of February and March, or during periods when the ground is not frozen or snow-covered.
- Headland stacking sites may not be used for more than 1 out of every 2 years.
- Headland stacking sites can only be used for manure with a solids content exceeding 32 percent.

15. The following sites are NOT approved for headland stacking, due to steep surrounding slopes, shallow groundwater, or removal of consideration by applicant:

- 04-02-068
- 04-02-011
- 04-02-093
- 04-03-010
- 04-03-028
- 04-02-042/3
- 04-03-009
- 04-02-036

#### MANURE & PROCESS WASTEWATER IRRIGATION

16. Irrigation of manure or process wastewater is prohibited.

#### SUBMITAL AND RECORDKEEPING REQUIREMENTS

17. A copy of this conditional approval shall be included in all future annual Nutrient Management Plan Updates in addition to the NR 243 and NRCS 590 checklists.

#### CONSIDERATIONS

18. Unique names were not assigned to the headland stacking sites, but since Ridge Breeze Dairy has only planned for one headland stacking site per field the field names were used in this approval. Please ensure that all headland stacking sites have a unique name assigned going forward.

19. Only one year of manure analyses were used for planning nutrient content in manure sources, due to the recent purchase of the facility. Please ensure that Ridge Breeze Dairy keeps up with the required manure sampling (2 samples per calendar month that liquid manure is spread, from each liquid source that is land applied; 1 sample per quarter that solid manure is spread from each source that is land applied) and ensure that the nutrients planned in future applications are adjusted as necessary based on future analysis.

20. Some of the planned application rates for liquid and solid manure are higher than typically seen. Ridge Breeze Dairy states that: “Ridge Breeze Dairy has access to several toolbars and will use several different toolbars to ensure manure is applied and retained on a given field. Rates planned are based on the actual equipment that will be used.” Please ensure that application rates this high are closely monitored and adjusted as needed based on antecedent soil conditions to ensure that there is no runoff.

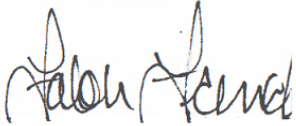
21. The animal unit to acreage ratio exceeds 1:1. This can lead to rising soil test P levels. It is recommended to monitor the soil nutrient content and adjust manure and fertilizer application rates, to ensure that fields do not build soil test P.

This conditional approval does not limit the Department’s regulatory authority to require NMP revisions (based upon new information or manure irrigation research findings) or request additional information in order to confirm or ensure your farm operation remains in compliance with NR 243 and your WPDES permit conditions. If additional information, project changes or other circumstances indicate a possible need to modify this approval, the Department may ask you to provide further information relating to this activity.

Please keep in mind that approval by the Department of Natural Resources – Runoff Management Program does not relieve you of obligations to meet all other applicable federal, state or local permits, zoning and regulatory requirements.

If you have any questions regarding this approval I can be reached at (608) 228-5265 or [Falon.French@Wisconsin.gov](mailto:Falon.French@Wisconsin.gov).

Sincerely,



Falon French  
WDNR CAFO Intake/Nutrient Management Specialist  
Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

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