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THIRD BILL IN SEN. JACQUE'S CLEAN WATER AGENDA CLEARS SENATE

'Win-win' measure reduces agricultural run-off while providing source of income for farmers

MADISON... Environmental legislation promoting a number of best practices and initiatives that would enable Wisconsin agriculture to generate income while reducing runoff into our waters cleared the State Senate today in a unanimous voice vote.

State Sen. André Jacque (R- De Pere) said the 'win-win' measure would support strategies to market organic products of composting manure, reducing the pressure on dairy farms to excessively spread it.

"Marketing manure can be a beneficial, low-risk way for livestock producers to manage animal waste on their farms while incorporating a value-added product into their overall business plan," Sen. Jacque said. "The opportunity to sell a waste product and recoup an economic benefit while reducing potential environmental liability is a much sought-after outcome this legislation will help to create."

Current law requires a fertilizer distributed in Wisconsin to be guaranteed to contain a combined weight of nitrogen, phosphorous, and potassium that is at least 24 percent of the total weight of the fertilizer unless DATCP promulgates a rule exempting the fertilizer, or DATCP grants a permit authorizing the distribution of the fertilizer as a nonagricultural or special-use fertilizer.

"These requirements currently make organic products of composting unsaleable in Wisconsin," Sen. Jacque said. "This legislation makes a number of reasonable changes to these requirements that apply to fertilizers and soil or plant additives that are derived from converting manure into compost and compost byproducts, thereby removing a barrier to the economic viability of manure composting in Wisconsin that is not present in other states."

Sen. Jacque said the proposal ([Senate Bill 24](#)) is identical to [2021 SB 113/AB 229](#), which passed the Senate last session in a voice vote, and unanimously cleared Assembly committee. Unfortunately, the bill was not taken up by the full Assembly last session, although essentially identical legislation did pass the Assembly in the previous session.

"In talking to experts who work with farmers to address the financial and logistical hurdles, it became clear that Wisconsin farms looking to make this environmentally friendly change also face regulatory obstacles," Sen. Jacque said. "This bill will help our producers sell the valuable organic compounds produced through the composting process that have been shown to create a profit center in other states."

The legislation ([Senate Bill 24](#)) is the third installment of Sen. André Jacque's Clean Water Agenda. Last session, Gov. Evers signed Jacque bills extending low-income grants to repair or replace failed private wells, and standardizing state and federal environmental audits that proactively protect our waters.

Senator André Jacque represents Northeast Wisconsin's First Senate District, consisting of Door and Kewaunee Counties and portions of Brown, Calumet, Manitowoc, and Outagamie counties.

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