

MAPPING: THE GOOD, THE BAD, AND THE UGLY

by David Kann, Regional Nutrient Management Specialist

Over the last few months, MDA has begun receiving nutrient management plan information from farmers across the state. Items that need improvement are the maps. Some are good, some are bad, and many are downright ugly. Maps are an important component of a nutrient management plan, thus it's important that the map "paint" a representative picture of the operation.

Maps need to be legible with the following information clearly marked: location and boundaries of the ag operation, individual field boundaries with field numbers and acreage totals.

Maps need to be legible as shown with the following information clearly marked:

1. LOCATION of the ag operation
2. BOUNDARIES of the ag operation
3. Individual FIELD BOUNDARIES
4. FIELD NUMBERS identified
5. ACREAGE for each field identified

Dark reproductions lacking landmarks and field locations are virtually unusable.

Dark reproductions lacking landmarks or field locations are the chief culprits. A good map, however, need not be expensive. Some of the most useful maps that we've come across are simple overlays of FSA maps with clearly labeled property boundaries, field locations, adjacent landmarks and

roads. A clearly marked agricultural operation sketch or soil survey map may be used when a map or aerial photograph is unavailable. For more information or further clarification on acceptable maps, please contact your regional nutrient management specialist.

