

Study nixes hog waste alternatives

A \$17.3 million study in North Carolina seeking alternatives to open-air ponds used to treat hog farm waste has ended without success.

After six years of study, researchers reported Wednesday they had not found any workable alternatives, the Raleigh News & Observer reported.

Mike Williams, a North Carolina State University professor and the lead researcher, told state legislators he found at least five dramatically better hog waste systems but they are all too expensive for use on existing hog farms, the newspaper reported.

However, Williams said he expects, with more study, some of the technologies might become more affordable in the future.

North Carolina legislators have been looking for an alternative to hog waste lagoons since the late 1990s when several lagoons overflowed into rivers. The state has placed a moratorium on new farms until September 2007.

The study was funded by two of the state's major pork producers, Smithfield Foods and Premium Standard Farms.

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