



# AGGRAVATION ACRES

Rich and Vicki Gilkinson operate Aggravation Acres, a 60 cow dairy on approximately 60 acres of pasture and 100 acres of cropland in Farmington Township.

The Gilkinsons utilize rotational grazing in their pastures by dividing large fields into smaller paddocks. This management of the pasture allows for better utilization of the forage by alternating active grazing sessions by the cows with rest periods for plant regrowth. The paddocks are established with the use of temporary fence and water is provided in each area.

Because this is a dairy operation, the animals must travel between the barn and the pasture several times a day. Heavily used travel lanes are susceptible to erosion and may cause foot problems in the animals when the lanes are wet and muddy. A solution to the problem is to stabilize the travel lane with geotextile fabric and gravel. The Gilkinsons completed construction of a 1085 foot laneway in 2007 as part of the federal Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP). The section of the laneway closest to the barn was completed several years ago under another conservation program, the Conewango Agricultural Stewardship Program. This section of the laneway consists of concrete

stairs that allow for easier travel up an incline behind the barn. The new gravel laneway starts at the edge of the concrete and extends to the back of the pasture.



Concrete stairs during construction.

Fencing was also built along the laneway to contain the animals to the stabilized area. Streambank fencing was built in the pasture to eliminate animal access into environmentally sensitive areas.

As part of EQIP, the Gilkinsons also completed several water control practices. The hillside behind the barn provided significant drainage during heavy rainfall events. Because the barn sits at the bottom of the slope, this water

ended up in and around the barn.

To address this problem, a series of basins and outlets were constructed in conjunction with a grassed waterway. These practices intercept the drainage water and transfer it to a stable outlet. This eliminates flooding problems in the barnyard, and keeps the clean water clean.



Stabilized laneway, basins, and waterway just after construction.

A new barn was recently built at the farm and the Gilkinsons, realizing the importance of barnyard conservation, installed drip drain roof runoff controls at their own expense. These drip drains collect clean roof water and transfer it to a stable outlet.



Plan view of the storm water management practices installed at the farm.