Vegetative Treatment Systems: Alternatives in Nebraska

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What is a “VTS”? 

- Vegetative Treatment Systems are fastly becoming a popular alternative to conventional systems.
- Can be more economical/environment friendly
- Instead of using a holding pond in a conventional system, you are using perennial plants and soil as your holding pond.
- Pods or even pivots will apply runoff to the specifically planted area (the Vegetative Treatment Area: VTA)
- Sediment Basins are still in place (similar to a conventional system)
- Sediment Basins are cleaned on an “as needed” basis, similar to the way they are managed in a conventional system
Sloped or Pumped VTS Systems
Management with VTS’s

- Height of the plant won’t dictate harvest like in a traditional “hay” situation... timing on the uptake of nutrients will dictate.
- Uniformity is key... erosion, gullies, etc are the worst nightmare of a VTS.
- Applying feedlot runoff after a rainfall event can cause (in DEQ’s eyes) a discharge.
- VTA’s are not to be grazed! These areas are planted with specific species in order to obtain optimal nutrient uptake.
- Perennial grasses and legumes make up a VTA; annual crops do not.
- Should VTA’s be bermed?
Freshly planted in April...
By July...
Recently mowed VTA
Check out Youtube for VTS videos:

- Baumert’s small AFO:
  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=frF3AtgrPGU

- Meister’s large AFO:
  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Sa68poCu5KY
THANK YOU

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