Do You Have Problems Storing your Manure?

- Manure can be an unsightly and smelly mess
- It can breed flies and be unhealthy for farm animals
- It can wash into streams, ponds and lakes where it causes the water to turn green and harm the fish
- If manure seeps into the water that people drink, it can make them sick
- Neighbors will find many reasons to complain when manure is not managed well.

Manure can be a problem if not managed properly

Benefits of Manure Storage:

- Storage makes it easier to get manure in the right place at the right time to improve the quality of your soil and the health of your crops
- With good storage and handling, manure can reduce your fertilizer bill
- Livestock will be cleaner and healthier

Properly stored manure can be an asset

Costs for a Manure Storage:

Storing manure can be expensive, but with thoughtful planning and careful management there are ways to keep the cost low.

- Dry manure is easier and cheaper to store and handle.
- Livestock on pasture spread their own manure.
- Manure storage size needs to be right for your livestock and management.

Manure Handling

Manure that is properly stored can be used for fertilizer. Here are some things you can do:

- Give your animals the necessary feed for health and growth, but do not overfeed them.
- The dryer you keep the manure the less storage you will need and the less you will have to transport to the field.
- With enough room animals can spread their own manure.
- Keep livestock in portable pens that you move around the field.
- Moving the location where you feed and water your animals can help prevent manure accumulation and the creation of bare areas.
- If it is necessary to confine livestock, consider keeping them under a roof so manure is not washed away by the rain.
- Straw and hay can create a bedded pack for the animals to stand and lie on.

Hogs on pasture spread their own manure

...as do cows, horses, sheep...

Spread Manure Often

- The more often manure is spread, the less need for storage.
- There are often periods of good weather and soil conditions during cold wet seasons when manure can be spread.
- It may be possible to shovel manure on to truck crops during the growing season
- Consider spreading manure on grasslands and woodlands when it is not possible to spread it on cropland.
- If the manure volume is small and the spreading is frequent you may be able to store your manure directly in a manure spreader.

Manure Storage

Open Lots

- All the water that runs off a bare lot with manure on it is polluted
- When animals are kept on bare lots, keep the lots away from streams, ponds, and wells
- Keep the lots small
- Divert clean water
- Water from roofs and surrounding areas should be captured and sent away from the animal lot
- Keep the lots clean by scraping regularly
- Paved open lots makes it easier to remove manure

Pigs on an open lot

Manure storage pond

Plastic covered dry manure

Storing Manure

The more animals you keep the more likely it will be necessary to construct a special manure storage facility.

- The storage must be able to keep the manure from washing away and its nutrients from leaking into the groundwater.
- It should also keep odors to a minimum.
- In most cases, there are laws and regulations governing storage facilities.

Common types of storage include

- Earthen pit
- Concrete pit
- Large tank
- Roofed building
- Covered dry stack

Help is Available

NRCS Natural Resources Conservation Service

SMALL SCALE SOLUTIONS FOR YOUR FARM

Technical Help Is Available

Your local Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) office has experienced conservationists that can assist you with manure storage. They can also help you develop a Conservation Plan to solve other problems you have identified on your farm.

There is no charge for our assistance. Simply call your local office at the number listed below to set up an appointment and we will come to your farm.

You may also be eligible to receive financial assistance, through a state or federal program. Your NRCS office will explain any programs that are available so you can make the best decision for your operation. All NRCS programs and services are voluntary.

Helping People Help the Land

For More Information Contact the:

Natural Resources Conservation Service

60 Quaker Lane, Suite 46
Warwick, RI 02886
(401) 828-1300
Web Address: www.ri.nrcs.usda.gov
E-mail Address: NRCSInfo@ri.usda.gov

NRCS accepts applications on a continuous basis throughout the year.

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