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Meeting the Regs with Manure & Compost

Relevant Regs

Agricultural Waste Control Regulation (AWCR)

www.env.gov.bc.ca/epd/industrial/regs/ag_waste_control/index.htm

This regulation establishes practices for storing, composting and land application of agricultural waste, including manure.

Organic Matter Recycling Regulation (OMRR)

www.env.gov.bc.ca/epd/codes/omr/index.htm

This regulation governs the production, quality and land application of some types of organic matter in B.C. including the production and use of compost.

Agricultural Land Reserve Use, Subdivision and Procedure Regulation

www.alc.gov.bc.ca/legislation/Reg/ALR_Use-Subd-Proc_Reg.htm

This regulation outlines permitted uses for land in the agricultural land reserve, including requirements for composting on ALR land.

Objectives

For the last 2 years, a study of the improved management of manure and compost was taken on by the Peace River Forage Association of BC. Through the lessons learned about equipment, handling manure and compost, the process and the quality of product that we were able to produce, we realize there is great potential for the use of these organic materials.

The objectives here are to explore the relevant regulations for the process and transport of manure and compost.

We asked for Ruth McDougall's assistance as she has had years of experience working with several commercial composting projects. Ruth is a Professional Agrologist and home based consultant working out of Vernon, BC.

Regulations for producing & distributing compost or manure in B.C.

In a nutshell: if you compost your own manure and use the compost on your own property or distribute it, regulatory requirements are minimal. The same applies if you bring in manure from elsewhere to compost for use on your property only. However, if you bring in manure from another farm for composting, and then distribute the compost elsewhere, the regulatory requirements become more complicated.

A few of the key requirements for composting and transporting organic materials like manure and compost are outlined in the following 4 scenarios using a question and answer format.



Scenario #1:

Rancher Rick: "Is there any difference, in terms of regs that we need to meet, if we are handling raw manure, partially composted manure, or finished high quality compost?"

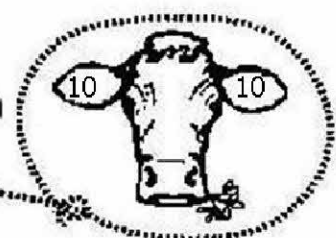
Reggy Ruth: "As long as you are using the material on your farm, the regulations do not differentiate between manure, partial compost or finished compost. However you cannot bring manure from another farm and redistribute it using your farm as a storage point, under any B.C. Regulation."

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Scenario #2:

Rancher Rick: “What do we need to be aware of if we are composting manure produced on our own ranch, to be used on our ranch? What about if we want to distribute the manure or compost to the neighbours?”

Reggy Ruth: “If you compost manure that has been produced by your livestock on your farm, you must comply with the **Agricultural Waste Control Regulation (AWCR)**. This regulation outlines the on-farm manure management requirements in B.C. These are the regulatory requirements that cover composting that you must adhere to in this regulation:

- ⇒ Composting must be done in a way that does not cause pollution of surface or groundwater.
- ⇒ Composting sites must be located at least 50 feet from surface water and 100 feet from water sources used for domestic purposes.

Your own manure, composted or not, can be used on your property or freely distributed. You can give it away or sell it in any quantity.

However, if you choose to sell it as a fertilizer you may have to comply with the requirements of the Federal Fertilizer Act. If you sell it as a soil amendment, there are no federal regulatory requirements. “

Scenario #3:

Rancher Rick: “What regs do we need to know about if we bring manure from another farm to compost and use on our farm?”

Reggy Ruth: “You can bring manure from elsewhere onto your property to use or to compost and use on your own fields. If you use all the manure or compost on your own property, you must comply with the **AWCR**. The regulatory requirements are the same as those outlined in Scenario #2.”

Scenario #4:

Rancher Rick: “What do we need to be aware of to compost manure from another farm that we want to distribute off our farm?”

Reggy Ruth: “If you plan to compost someone else’s manure on your property and distribute the compost off your property, the regulatory requirements are a lot more complicated. You must now comply with both the **Organic Matter Recycling Regulation (OMRR)** and the **Agricultural Land Commission Act**, both of which have requirements for composting.

If you bring in manure to your property, compost it and then distribute it off your property you are considered a composting ‘site’ or ‘facility’. You must meet the requirements of the **OMRR** which include:

- ⇒ Registration of your site with the Ministry of Environment
- ⇒ Preparation of compost facility plans that outline how leachate and odours from the site will be controlled (must be done by a qualified professional)

- ⇒ Annual or more frequent testing of finished compost to ensure that it meets OMRR Class A or Class B pathogen and trace element standards
- ⇒ Recording of compost temperatures to demonstrate that the compost met the minimum time and temperature requirements

If you are composting on ALR land and are classified as a compost facility because you are bringing off-site materials on to your farm for composting, and then distributing the finished compost off-farm, the Agricultural Land Commission also has some regulatory requirements. They require that compost that is made on ALR land and distributed off-farm must meet Class A compost pathogen and trace element standards from the OMRR. If compost facilities are sited on ALR land, they restrict the amount of compost that can be sold to 50% of the total volume produced. The ALC prohibits the making of Class B compost on land in the ALR; if you wish to do this, you must obtain a permit from the ALC.”

Please consult the actual regulations using the websites on page 1 for more complete information.

Compiled by: Ruth McDougall, Sandra Burton and Rick Kantz in Mar 2010.

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