

# Guidelines for poultry waste

## ■ Introduction

This fact sheet contains the guidelines for disposing of poultry waste. The information is designed to help poultry farmers avoid harming the environment and improve pasture production.

Poultry waste contains high levels of nutrients and bacteria. If raw poultry waste or washwater is discharged into a water course it can harm aquatic life, jeopardise the quality of our drinking water and affect the use of our streams, lakes and harbours for recreation and tourism.

Poultry waste can also be considered a valuable source of nutrients and used as a fertiliser to improve pasture production.

## ■ Proposed Auckland Regional Plan: Air, Land and Water (PARP:ALW)

Wastes from production land activities are covered under the PARP:ALW. Under the Plan, the discharge to land of up to 10 m<sup>3</sup> per day of wastewater is classed as a permitted activity. Larger volumes require resource consent to discharge contaminants.

## ■ Guidelines for handling poultry shed wastewater

- Poultry waste water must not be discharged into any surface water through stormwater drains or via land run-off.
- Washwater must be collected and directed to a central point e.g. a sump.
- Use a spreading device such as a low application irrigator to apply wastewater to land over a wider area.
- Application rate will need to be adjusted depending on soil and weather conditions.
- A contingency plan must be implemented in the event of system failure, or inclement weather conditions prevent land application.



- Minimise the wastewater stored by diverting stormwater away from waste collection and holding facilities.
- Avoid saturation or soil degradation when applying wastewater to land. Avoid pooling and overland run-off.
- Do not apply wastewater onto land faster than it can be absorbed and identify and carefully manage problem areas such as sloping sites, or proximity to watercourses etc.
- Land application at a rate that matches crop or pasture uptake of the nutrients is encouraged (maximum of 150-200 Kg N/hectare/yr for grazed pasture depending on soil type).
- Apply washwater onto short growing pasture to maximise nutrient uptake.
- Do not spread waste water closer than 20m from any waterway, wetland, open drain, gully base, water bore, or closer than 20m from the boundary of any neighbouring property.
- Record (in writing) the date of each discharge, total volume (m<sup>3</sup>/day), disposal method used, weather and ground conditions at time of disposal.

## ■ Guidelines for handling poultry manure/litter

There is no volume restriction for solid waste disposal, but the storage, composting and land application of solid waste is subject to permitted activity rules.

- Stored solid waste can produce leachate, which can cause extensive damage if it enters a waterway or groundwater system.
- Solid waste storage facilities should be located well away from any drain, stream or water supply bore.
- Stockpiles should be stored on an impermeable surface with stormwater diversions installed.
- Collection drains and storage should also be installed to collect any leachate produced.
- Poultry manure must be applied to land at an appropriate rate – which matches crop or pasture uptake (maximum of 150 – 200 Kg N/hectare/yr for grazed pasture, depending on soil type).
- Do not apply manure to land when soils are saturated or within 20 metres of a watercourse or within 100 metres of a water supply bore.
- Do not store or spread solid waste in a manner which causes odour nuisance beyond the boundary of your property.

## ■ For more information

Phone the ARC on 09 366 2000 and press 1 for further information and advice or phone the 24 hour Pollution Hotline on 09 377 3107.

The ARC has a range of fact sheets relating to farm discharge rules and best practice guidelines. Copies are available online at [www.arc.govt.nz](http://www.arc.govt.nz) or upon request.

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