

## FARM PRACTICE

## FARMSTEAD REFUSE

### Description

The management of all wastes created in British Columbia is subject to the *Environmental Management Act*. It specifies how wastes may be stored, handled and disposed. If agricultural wastes are handled as outlined in the *Agricultural Waste Control Regulation* and the *Code of Agricultural Practice for Waste Management*, a permit is not required. Agricultural wastes include manure, used mushroom medium, agricultural vegetation waste, wood waste and mortalities.

Some of the wastes produced on B.C. farms are not covered under the *Agricultural Waste Control Regulation*. For example, wastes generated by the on-farm processing, handling and sale of farm products are not considered to be agricultural wastes under the Act. These and other non-agricultural wastes are subject to provisions within the *Environmental Management Act*.

Wastes not considered as agricultural wastes which may be created on a farm include the following:

- plastics products such as plant pots, fertilizer bags, feed and silage bags, poly rope and twine, tarps, barrels used to ship and store chemicals, oil, solvents, fertilizer and polyethylene from greenhouses
- glass products such as jars, bottles and greenhouse windows
- metal materials such as agri-chemical containers, wire, packaging and construction materials
- wood products such as sawdust, shavings, lumber, fence posts, pallets, and demolished structures
- paper materials such as fertilizer and chemical bags, and wrapping
- cardboard products such as waxed and unwaxed boxes
- growing media such as rock wool, peat, and bark

### Activities and Operations

#### Waste Disposal

The following guidelines apply to the disposal of wastes produced on a farm:

- Where appropriate, every effort should be made to store, recycle and dispose of the waste in an environmentally responsible manner.
- Wastes should only be recycled if they are free of contaminants and are recycled by an approved facility.
- Composting should be done in accordance with guidelines outlined in the Farm Practice entitled *Composting*.
- Burning of waste should only be done in accordance with the *Environmental Management Act*, the *Open Burning Smoke Control Regulation*, and applicable local government bylaws.
- If landfilling is the only option being considered for solid wastes, they should only be disposed of in an approved municipal solid waste landfill.

## Veterinary Waste

Veterinary wastes must be disposed of in a safe manner as outlined in the publication entitled *Agriculture and the Environment: Reference Handbook for Livestock Producers of BC*.

## Related Farm Practices

Other farm practices that pertain to farmstead refuse include, but are not limited to, the following.

### On-Farm Processing

On-farm processing wastes are required to be handled and disposed of as outlined within the *Environmental Management Act*.

See also Farm Practice: [Product Processing](#)

### Non-Agricultural Waste

Use of non-agricultural waste derived from processes or recycling of municipal solid waste, industrial, commercial and institutional waste, or demolition and land clearing waste may require the issuance of a permit or approval under the *Environmental Management Act*. If non-agricultural waste is to be applied to land within the Agricultural Land Reserve, approval from the Agricultural Land Commission may also be required.

See also Farm Practice: [Non-Agricultural Waste](#)

### Wood Waste

Wood waste must be handled and disposed of as outlined within the *Environmental Management Act*.

See also Farm Practice: [Wood Waste](#)

## Legislation

Information on federal and provincial legislation can be found in Appendices B and C. Acts, regulations and bylaws that regulate or may affect farm refuse may include, but are not limited to, the following.

### Provincial Legislation

The *Environmental Management Act* protects the soil, water and air environment from pollution. Included under this Act are the following applicable regulations:

- The *Agricultural Waste Control Regulation* which allows farmers to operate without a waste permit when handling and disposing of agricultural wastes according to the *Code of Agricultural Practice for Waste Management*.
- The *Hazardous Waste Regulation* which provides minimum standards and guidelines for handling and disposal of dangerous goods such as batteries, waste oil, solvents and waste asbestos from buildings.
- The *Open Burning Smoke Control Regulation* which sets minimum standards for emissions related to smoke from open burning activities.
- The *Organic Matter Recycling Regulation* which regulates composting and land application for a range of organic materials, including compost from non-agricultural wastes.

- The *Mushroom Composting Pollution Prevention Regulation* which deals specifically with the requirements of any mushroom media production facility.
- The *Recycling Regulation* which requires oil vendors to take back used oil.
- The *Storage of Recyclable Material Regulation* which specifies the manner, maximum quantity and storage duration for materials containing gypsum.

The *Public Health Act* safeguards the health of British Columbians and the *Sewerage System Regulation* under the *Public Health Act* controls wastes that might harm domestic water.

## Publications

Publications that provide information on farm refuse handling and disposal practices include, but are not limited to, the following. Refer to Appendix D for details.

*Agriculture and the Environment: Reference Handbook for Livestock Producers of BC*  
*British Columbia Environmental Farm Plan Reference Guide*  
*British Columbia Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) Guide*  
*On-Farm Food Safety*