

Flood-Spoiled Feed Management

Livestock producers have faced a variety of impacts from the recent flooding events in Southwestern BC. One of these challenges is contamination and spoilage of feed (e.g., grain, total mixed ration, hay, silage, etc.). For producers disposing of spoiled feed, either composting on-farm or storage for future land application are often the best management options. The ministry has collected general guidance to support producers in implementing these practices.

Composting on-farm

Composting and the application of that compost is regulated by the *Code of Practice for Agricultural Environmental Management*. Guidance for these requirements is available on the following pages:

- [Nutrient Application - Requirements](#)
- [Agricultural Composting - Requirements](#)

General guidance includes:

- Feed that will be composted should be moved to a dry area (or driest part if flooding still partially present) of the pasture/property.
- The compost piles should be well away from buildings, as composting feed can reach temperatures high enough to combust and fires can spread quickly.
- Keep compost/feed piles small to reduce fire risks. Having multiple smaller compost piles is better than having one big compost pile.
 - Compost/feed piles should be kept low (4 to 6 feet maximum) this reduces fires risks by keeping internal temperatures low.
 - If a fire does start, there is less fuel if the pile size is kept small.
- Feed and grain in bins should be inspected regularly for the presence of increased moisture and water infiltration. Wet grain can be mixed in compost piles with other feed.

Storage for future land application

- Carefully inspect the outside of bales, ag bags, etc. for the presence of increased moisture and water infiltration.
 - If a bale is wet any identified wet hay should be discarded, at least the outer 20% of the bale should be discarded (this may vary by how much flood water

was on the property and how long it was there), and the hay next to the wet layer should be discarded as a precaution.

- Flooded ag bags may only be wet on one side. It is necessary to inspect the bottom portion of the bag as water will often move along the bottom of the bag/feed.
- The outer perimeter of silage piles should be inspected for contamination. Flood-contaminated silage and the two feet of silage next to the contaminated area should be discarded.
- If there is a concern for local wildlife scavengers disturbing disposed feed, any grain should be mixed with or placed under cover of hay/silage.