

Re: MANURE SPREADING ADVISORY #3 - 2008: SOUTH COASTAL REGION

Date: April 14, 2008

The following advisory is produced by government, in partnership with industry, to provide guidance to farmers regarding the *Agricultural Waste Control Regulation* and the *ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT ACT*. If a discrepancy arises between this document and the legislation, the legislation takes precedence. Following this advisory does not relieve anyone from their obligations under the LEGISLATION. The Province of British Columbia does not guarantee the accuracy or completeness of the information referenced here from legislation, and in no event is the Province liable or responsible for damages of any kind arising out of its use.

Manure application conditions have improved since the last advisory and manure application is now suitable on many sites.

Please read the entire advisory as it contains important information to assist producers with decision-making about manure application.

Producers are responsible for decisions regarding manure spreading. Legislation does not give specific dates for manure spreading, but allows for the use of manure as a fertilizer, and does not allow for manure to be spread in a manner that causes pollution.

The “Manure Spreading Advisory Committee” (consisting of industry and government representatives) will be monitoring weather and soil conditions and will issue further advisories as considered necessary.

Current Conditions:

Soil: Soil moisture ranges from moist to saturated. Soil temperature in Abbotsford is about 11°C.

Crops: Most crops are now at a suitable stage for receiving nutrients.

Environmental Risks from Manure Application:

The principal environmental risks associated with manure application at this time are:

- surface runoff of manure nutrients and pathogens to water courses during subsequent precipitation events
- short-circuit flow of manure nutrients and pathogens to water courses through drain-tiles
- soil compaction from operating heavy equipment on fields that are very wet

Given the above risks, the “Manure Spreading Advisory Committee” (consisting of industry and government representatives) is **advising that careful manure application is now suitable on many sites.**

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Further information for specific crops is provided below:

Perennial Grassland and Well-Established Cover Crops

Consider the following recommendations when applying manure:

- only apply manure when soil is trafficable and there is no significant rain forecast for the next 5 days
- apply at rates matched to crop nutrient requirements
- maintain adequate setbacks to watercourses to avoid runoff (at this time of year, suggested minimum setback distance is 5 metres (16 feet), depending on a variety of factors including weather, topography, soil conditions and rate of application)
- do not apply manure to tile-drained fields, particularly if water is currently flowing through the drain tiles
- do not apply manure to areas of fields that are saturated
- do not apply manure to areas of fields that are subject to flooding or runoff

Bare land

Application to bare land should be considered only for soils that are trafficable and for which a new crop will be planted shortly. Manure should be injected or incorporated as soon as possible after application. If applying manure, use precautionary measures listed under Perennial Grassland.

Berry Crops

If field conditions allow, manure application to meet crop nutrient needs for this time of year is acceptable. Rates of application should follow berry industry guidelines (less than 100 kg total manure N/ha). If applying manure, use precautionary measures listed under Perennial Grassland.

