



Poultry Waste Management Regulations

Waste management is an important component of poultry production. Unlike many of the equipment and inventory management issues, waste management is the sole responsibility of the grower. Current state regulations require growers to manage all waste materials, including litter and dead birds, to assure beneficial use of the waste, and also to prevent adverse effects to the environment.

In some cases, poultry waste may be a valuable by-product, but in other cases it is a net cost. In the spring of 1998, the Oklahoma legislature passed the **Oklahoma Registered Poultry Feeding Operations Act**, pertaining to poultry farmers producing more than 10 tons of poultry waste per year and confining birds for 45 days or more in any 12 month period. Additionally, the **Oklahoma Poultry Waste Applicators Certification Act** was passed affecting anyone land-applying more than 10 tons of poultry waste or litter per year.

The Oklahoma Department of Agriculture, Food and Forestry (ODAFF), Agricultural Environmental Management Services (AEMS) is responsible for developing rules and enforcing these acts.

Registration/Certification

Poultry producers are required by law to register their operation while commercial and private poultry waste applicators must apply for an applicator's certificate, both through the State Board of Agriculture.

Annual renewals are required for producer registration and commercial applicator certificates. Private waste applicators are required to renew their license every five years. Only certified private or commercial waste applicators can apply poultry waste to land. Certified applicators are required to submit an official applicator's annual report by December 31 of each year to the AEMS Division of ODAFF for poultry waste land-applied from July 1 of the previous year through June 30 of the current year. For example, applicators who apply poultry litter between July 1, 2011 and June 30, 2012 are required to submit an annual report no later than December 31, 2012.

Education

Both registered operators of poultry feeding operations and poultry waste applicators are required to attend poultry waste management education classes conducted by the Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service. An initial 9-hour class is required within one year of purchasing or constructing a poultry operation or within one year of obtaining a commercial poultry waste applicator's certificate. Additionally, continuing education is required thereafter. For detailed information on current education requirements, refer to **SB92 Changes in Education Requirements**.

Environmental Considerations

Poultry producers must develop an approved Nutrient Management Plan (NMP) and maintain records of poultry waste removed from the premises or land applied on-site. The

amount of poultry waste or litter that may be land applied on the property of the poultry feeding operation is limited according to nutrient management guidelines established in the NMP. These guidelines only allow litter use as a beneficial fertilizer to pasture or cropland, not as a disposal system. If poultry waste or litter cannot be used according to nutrient management guidelines, the producer must see that it is removed to a location where it can be used properly. In some cases, the producer may sell the by-product to other individuals for land application or to commercial composting, chemical production or energy production facilities. A website www.ok-littermarket.org is available to promote the marketing of poultry litter.

Prior to any land application of poultry waste or litter in the state of Oklahoma, a certified applicator must obtain recent soil tests for each land application site and recent poultry waste or litter analyses. Land application rates must follow current USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Waste Utilization Standards. For more information on soil and litter testing, contact your local County Extension Office.

The NMP required under the Registered Poultry Feeding Operations Act also imposes restrictions on the disposal of poultry carcasses to prevent environmental and health problems. Under the law, acceptable disposal methods include approved composting, incineration, on-farm burial, landfill burial, and disposal in a rendering plant.

ODAFF inspects poultry operations routinely to determine whether there are any violations and may also visit when investigating pollution complaints alleging that a waste disposal problem exists. If a poultry operation is found to be disposing of wastes in such a manner that surface or ground water contamination is occurring that operation will be required to implement waste management practices to correct the problem. Failure to comply could result in a fine to the grower.

If a poultry operation seeks classification as a permitted Concentrated Animal Feeding Operation (CAFO), then it is not subject to the rules of the Oklahoma Registered Poultry Feeding Operations Act; however, it is subject to the rules of the Oklahoma Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations Act. This act requires producers to obtain an Oklahoma CAFO license and develop and implement a Pollution Prevention Plan.

If you have questions determining whether your operation is classified as a CAFO or questions pertaining to the Oklahoma Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations Act, the Oklahoma Registered Poultry Feeding Operations Act or the Oklahoma Poultry Waste Applicators Certification Act, please contact the AEMS Division of ODAFF at (405) 522 4659. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) <http://www.epa.gov/> also provides useful information concerning CAFOs on their website.