

**NUTRIENT MANAGEMENT**

# Manure Management Plans for Minnesota Livestock Producers

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Are you confused about the manure management plans in Minnesota? There has been a lot of discussion and many people are wondering who needs to complete one and what needs to be included in a nutrient management plan. The purpose of this article is to educate producers about the requirements for completing a manure management plan that will meet Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) regulation.

Manure management plans describe how the manure generated at a feedlot facility is going to be used during the upcoming cropping year(s) in a way that meets all regulations, protects waters of the state, and maximizes the benefits of applying manure to cropland (MPCA Fact sheet Wq-f8.07). It is *recommended* that all livestock operations complete a manure management plan. However, manure management plans are only *required* by MPCA in the following situations (MPCA Fact sheet Wq-f8.07):

1. A permit application is submitted from an operation with 100 animal units or more after October 23, 2000
2. Manure from a feedlot capable of holding 300 or more animal units is applied after January 1, 2006 .

In other words, by January 1, 2006 all livestock operations with 300 or more animal units must complete a manure management plan or have manure spread by a certified commercial applicator to be in compliance with MPCA.

If manure is applied by a commercial applicator, the feedlot owner is *not required* to complete a manure management plan. However, if a feedlot contains 100 or more animal units, the feedlot owner is required to maintain manure application records, regardless of whether a commercial applicator applies the manure. Commercial applicators must keep a copy of manure application records and provide the owner of the feedlot or manure storage area with these records no later than 60 days following land application. When ownership of manure is transferred for application to fields that are not owned or leased by the owner of the animal feedlot, a manure management plan is partially completed by the feedlot owner and partially completed by the manager of the field(s) where the manure is applied (MPCA Fact sheet wq-f8.11).

Producers *do not* need to submit their plans to MPCA for review unless specifically requested by the MPCA or a County Feedlot Officer, or when applying for a permit. However, feedlot owners may be asked to show an updated manure management plan and associated records when the feedlot is inspected (MPCA Fact sheet wq-f 8.07). The manure management plan must be kept up-to-date. Review the plan each year to reflect changes in crop rotation, manure nutrient levels,

changes in manure application methods, and other factors that contribute to the nutrient availability of the manure and the crop nutrient needs.

In general, the following information must be included in a manure management plan (MPCA Fact sheet wq-f8.07):

1. Manure storage, handling and testing practices
2. Field locations and acreage used for spreading manure
3. Field-specific nutrient management; and
4. Management for sensitive areas

Producers are not required to use any specific format when writing a manure management plan. They may use forms or software developed by MPCA, National Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), University of Minnesota Extension Service, or other private organizations. However, the following resources are available for use in developing a manure management plan:

*Manure Management Plan: A Step-by-Step Guide for Minnesota Feedlot Operators:* This guide was developed by MPCA, with assistance from the University of Minnesota Extension Service to assist producers in writing their plans. It is available online at <http://www.pca.state.mn.us/publications/wq-f8-09.pdf>

*MPCA Manure Management Plan Spreadsheet :* This is a Microsoft EXCEL spreadsheet that includes all MPCA requirements. It is currently being developed and will be available soon at <http://www.pca.state.mn.us/hot/feedlot-management.html>

*Nutrient Management Planner for Minnesota :* This is a Microsoft ACCESS-based program developed by the University of Minnesota Extension Service and NRCS. This program can be used to complete a manure management plan for both NRCS EQIP and MPCA requirements.

The University of Minnesota Extension Service holds free workshops on how to complete your manure management plan. These are generally small group workshops. Local Extension Educators or private organizations may also be able to provide assistance in completing a manure management plan. To find a private technical service provider in your area to assist with writing a manure management plan, go to the NRCS TechReg website <http://techreg.usda.gov/CustLocateTSP.aspx> and click on your area.

For more information about manure management plans contact Local or Regional Extension Educators or County Feedlot Officers. Additional information is available from Mindy Spiehs.

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