

9.0 DISPOSAL OF FARM WASTES

Like most business enterprises, every farm produces some type of waste material. Like manure, these waste materials must be disposed of in an environmentally acceptable manner to minimize the likelihood of contaminating soil and water. Common waste materials found on horticulture farms include:

- ! waste fruit and vegetables (including organic waste dumps);
- ! general packaging (for example, boxes, bags, plastics);
- ! petroleum products such as used motor oil;
- ! paints and preservatives;
- ! machinery and equipment including inert components, tires and restricted use components such as batteries; and,
- ! farm structures such as old buildings including building components.

Waste Fruit and Vegetables

Many of these wastes are wet and decompose readily. Under these circumstances, problems with odour, leachate and contaminated runoff may easily develop. You can avoid these problems by practicing the following:

- ! following the harvest, plow in plant refuse to reduce the spread of disease and minimize odour;
- ! if possible, process vegetable and fruit wastes into animal feed quickly to reduce the amount of waste and decomposition and help to reduce feeding costs;
- ! provide adequate storage facilities (preferably covered) appropriate for the material;
- ! locate the storage facilities away from, and where possible, downwind from neighbors;
- ! avoid water quality problems by collecting, storing and properly disposing of leachate or liquor from the stored material (it can be a highly concentrated pollutant); and,
- ! bury or spray, culled potatoes should be buried or sprayed to prevent them from growing (otherwise they can be a source of late blight).

General Packaging

Reuse or recycle farm plastics (containers, for example, silage wrap, black plastic mulch, greenhouse plastics and greenhouse transplant flats) and other packaging materials whenever possible. Packaging materials that once contained toxic materials, such as pesticides need to be disposed of as per guidelines for the disposal of pesticide containers.

Materials not reused or recycled such as rock wool must be disposed of at an approved municipal land-fill site or any other approved facility. Burning of plastics is also considered acceptable in Newfoundland and Labrador but only after you have contacted the Department of Environment for details.

Petroleum Products (including handling and storage)

All farms use petroleum products such as gasoline, diesel fuel, machinery oil and hydraulic fluids, and produce petroleum wastes such as used motor oil and hydraulic fluids. These should be stored in a double tank. Improper storage and handling of petroleum products presents a threat to public health and water quality. A few quarts of gasoline in the ground water may be enough to severely pollute your drinking water supply. At low levels, fuel contaminants cannot be detected by smell or taste but present a very real health threat. Petroleum products contain a number of potentially toxic compounds that are known carcinogens (cancer causing agents) to laboratory animals and humans.

Storage and handling of petroleum products are regulated under “The Storage and Handling of Gasoline and Associated Products Regulations” of the Environment Act. These regulations are administered by the Government Services Centre, Department of Government Services and Lands. Additional information on requirements or applications to install systems in accordance with the regulations are available from the Government Services Centre’s regional offices. Dispose of unwanted waste oil and hydraulic fluids by first collecting them in either a tank or containers and then transporting them to a local oil recycling depot or a licensed waste oil collection contractor. Used motor oil can be used as a lubricant on equipment. Waste oil should not be burned.

Any floor drainage from a service area where oil is being used has to be routed through an oil separator before being discharged. The used waste oil floating in the separator must be removed regularly and deposited in the waste oil tank or container.

In the case of a petroleum storage and handling leak or spill, immediately call the Environmental Emergencies 24-Hour Report Line. For more information, refer to the Factsheet, Storage and Handling of Petroleum Products on the Farm, Publication GT005, November 5, 1996.

Paints and Preservatives

These and other materials such as adhesives and lubricants must be safely stored on farm and used up as needed, shared with a neighbor or brought to a recycling depot.

Machinery and Equipment

Reuse and recycle whenever possible. If this is not possible, equipment must be collected and disposed of at an approved municipal waste disposal site or facility or to a scrap dealer.

Disposal of oil, fuel and antifreeze should be done through a licensed oil contractor. Disposal of refrigerant is regulated under the regulations for refrigerant and halons. Contact your regional Government Services Centres for information on proper disposal methods for these materials.

Farm Structures and Building Components

Building components include such materials as wood frames, glass, sheet steel, plastic, shingles. Store materials on farm for future reuse or recycling. The remaining materials must be collected and disposed of at an approved municipal waste disposal site.

Restricted use old building components include materials such as insulation, pressure treated materials, asbestos materials, composite products and treated lumber. Reuse or recycle where possible. Otherwise, the materials must be taken to an approved landfill, waste disposal site or depot for hazardous materials. For the proper disposal of asbestos, contact your regional Government Services Centre.

For further information, obtain a copy of the following:

- Disposal of Household and Farm Wastes, Department of Forest Resources and Agrifoods, 1997.
- Disposal of Dead Animals, Department of Forest Resources and Agrifoods, 1997.