

Manure Management Plan

By:

THE MUNICIPALITY OF BETHEL PARK



Reference Ordinance No.: 9-10-18

Section: 69.35.4.7. Specific Standards for Chickens

- * Supplemental attachments provided for Best Management Practices (BMPs) and compositing guidelines within the Municipality of Bethel Park to be completed prior to permit approval.

November 8, 2018

OPTIONS FOR MANURE DISPOSAL

(Choose One)

1. Compost

1.1 Requirements for Composting

a.) Municipal Regulations:

- Backyard composting piles or bins must be located at least 5' from property line
- Compost piles must be aerated by turning at least once every other month
- Compost piles must be maintained in a manner that mitigates obnoxious odors
- No cooked food or animal products should be placed in compost pile
- Backyard composting must be constructed and maintained in a manner to prevent a harborage for rodents and/or vermin

1.2 Requirements for Chicken Manure Management

a.) Best Management Practices (BMPs)

- Compost pile must not be within 25' of a conveyance source to the waterways of the Commonwealth or located within the FEMA designated floodplain.
- Application of manure to vegetated areas is not permissible without first being composted, i.e. soil incorporation
- Refer to nutrient requirements prior to applying composted manure to any vegetable or flower garden

2. Discard with weekly trash collection

INFORMATIONAL

In order to maintain a healthy environment for your chickens, coops should be cleaned at least once a month during the winter and every two weeks during the summer months.

Wood chips or a similar comparable is suitable for bedding within the coop and/or laying area. Straw or hay tends to hold moisture, which invites mold and bacteria into the living space.

Coops should be well ventilated, especially in the winter months, due to the generation of high levels of heat, moisture and ammonia from the chickens breath and droppings. Even low levels of ammonia can be harmful to your chicken's respiratory system.

During the winter months, chickens will begin to not lay eggs as to conserve heat energy. You may provide a heat source, but use caution when introducing a light fixture as chickens may peck at it potentially causing a fire hazard. Low volume heat panels can be purchased online, which will keep your chickens laying eggs all year around.

Always have a water supply for your chickens, but do not keep it up in the coop, it only adds to the high moisture problem for which you are trying to avoid. If an electrical source is not available to supply a heated water dish, there are several articles and videos available online to construct a self-sustaining water supply during the winter months.

Within Western Pennsylvania, hawks are probably a chicken's biggest threat. If you anticipate a run area for your chickens, it would be good idea to have it covered to avoid the possibility of an air strike on your chickens by a predatory hawk. The covered run will also keep your chickens contained versus just a fence that they will eventually escape from.

Understand that in Bethel Park your chickens should be considered pets, so go ahead and name them. They provide a great source of entertainment, as well as a bounty of fresh eggs.

This short list, as well as many other sources of information can be found online, via the internet or social websites such as Facebook. Please do your homework before deciding to take on this endeavor, the efforts will aide in your success as proud chicken owners.

SOURCES

J.P. Chastain, J.J. Camberato, and P. Skewes, Poultry Manure Production and Nutrient Content. Chapter 3b.

Penn State Extension, The Basics of Manure Management Requirements. Pennsylvania Nutrient Management Program

IFAS Extension, G. Hochmuth, R. Hochmuth, and R. Mylavarapu², Using Composted Poultry Manure in Mulched Vegetable Production. Published October 2009, Revised June 2016

The Clean Michigan Fund and Department of Natural Resources, Source Recovery Section, Composting at a Glance. The Municipality of Bethel Park, Don't Throw Away a Good Thing...Compost!