

Maryland's Winter Manure and FPR Restrictions

Run December 16 – February 28

Know the Rules...

To help protect local waterways from nutrient runoff, Maryland does not allow farmers to spread manure, food processing residuals (FPRs), and other nutrient sources in winter. The rule applies to all farm operations, regardless of type, size, or location. Farmers may resume spreading on March 1, 2026, as long as fields are not saturated, snow-covered, or hard-frozen.



Please...

- Store liquid manure sources generated on the farm in structures.
- Apply potash and liming materials if needed.
- Contact MDA for guidance on storing FPRs.

Do not...

- Apply organic nutrient sources to fields before March 1.
- Apply organic nutrient sources if fields are saturated, snow covered, or hard-frozen.
- Apply chemical fertilizer before March 1. There are exceptions to this rule. Contact your regional nutrient management specialist or University of Maryland Extension advisor for guidance.

Remember...

- Manure deposited directly by livestock is not restricted.
- Spreading can resume March 1 as long as fields are not frozen or snow covered.
- Maryland's winter manure spreading restrictions apply to all livestock operations—large and small. Contact your soil conservation district for free help with storage solutions.

In an Emergency...

Call 410-841-5959 or your regional nutrient management specialist if winter spreading becomes unavoidable. To avoid penalties, please get emergency approval *before any spreading takes place*. The department will work with you to prevent overflows from liquid or non-stackable manures to minimize impacts to water quality. Stackable solids may not be applied to fields in winter, but temporary stockpiling is allowed for solid manures.

Stockpiles

Temporary field stockpiling of poultry litter and other "stackable" organic nutrient sources with 60% or less moisture content is allowed *only* when all other storage options are unavailable. *Here are the rules:*

- Stack the stockpile at least 6 feet high with a peak to allow it to shed rainfall.

- Make certain that the stockpile area is:
 - ✓ At least 100 feet from surface water and irrigation or treatment ditches
 - ✓ At least 35 feet away if a vegetative buffer is in place
 - ✓ At least 150 feet from wells, springs, and wetlands
 - ✓ At least 300 feet from wells that are downhill from the stockpile
 - ✓ At least 200 feet from homes not on the operator's property
 - ✓ Outside flood prone areas and areas prone to ponding
 - ✓ No farther than 150 feet from the top of a 3% slope with no diversion
- Spread stockpiled manure on fields no earlier than March 1 the first spring after the stockpile was created. Follow your nutrient management plan.
- After the stockpile is removed, thoroughly scrape or clean the ground and restore the area to its original condition.
- Reseed the area with grass or a crop.

Questions?

Contact your regional nutrient management specialist listed on the back of this newsletter if you have questions about the restrictions for spreading manure or FPRs.