

Manure Management Records are Mandatory in Alberta

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Under the **Agricultural Operation Practices Act** (AOPA), anyone, including crop and livestock producers, as well as manure haulers and applicators, who handles more than 500 tonnes per year of manure, must keep records for a minimum of five years.

“When we are talking about manure, we’re including everything from manure, compost, bedding, and feed to the wash water,” says Deanne Madsen, CFO (confined feeding operation) extension specialist, Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development (ARD), Morinville. “Anything that touches manure is considered manure and included in this total.”

The records may be requested by the Natural Resources Conservation Board (NRCB), says Madsen. “Records are required for recording manure production, applications and transfers to ensure soil nitrate-nitrogen and salinity levels aren’t being exceeded.”

To help put 500 tonnes into perspective, Madsen says if you’re using a solid manure applicator with a thirty tonne load, 500 tonnes is about 19 trucks worth. An excellent resource is the [Nutrient Management Planning Guide](#). Madsen says there is a [table](#) in the guide with solid manure production estimates for different livestock categories.

“If you are managing liquid manure, about 100,000 imperial gallons is equal to 500 tonnes of manure,” says Madsen. She cites an example using dairy cows from the liquid manure production values in the [AOPA Manure Characteristics and Land Base Code](#). “If you have approximately 20 lactating dairy cows in a free stall barn that produce about 21 imperial gallons per day each, then you are managing approximately 158,000 imperial gallons and you’re going to need to keep records.”

Any operation in Alberta that is permitted under AOPA produces enough manure that manure management records must be kept. Records include who handled the manure, and what, where, and when manure was applied, says Madsen. “Essentially, this means recording how much manure was applied to meet crop needs based on soil tests. Repeat applications of manure at rates exceeding crop needs can reduce the soil’s ability to remain at peak productivity over the long-term, as well as increase the chance of nutrients being lost to surface water and groundwater. To avoid this, it is important to keep and refer back to manure management records frequently.”

For more information, there are two factsheets on the AOPA Legislation website under publications covering [manure spreading regulations](#) and [record keeping](#).

“If you need the table, the factsheets, or help with any of this, contact an ARD CFO extension specialist through 310-FARM (3276),” adds Madsen. “You can also go directly to our website at www.agriculture.alberta.ca/aopa for more information.”

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