

## 9 Record Keeping

Manure management planning requires that the manure management information be organized and application practices well documented. This requires record keeping, which can serve a number of purposes. Proper record keeping can be used to demonstrate due diligence in manure management. In certain jurisdictions producers are required to keep on-farm records. For example, in Alberta these requirements are documented in the Agricultural Operation Practices Act (SA 2002). Queen's Printer for the Province of Alberta. Producers should check with their local departments of agriculture to determine if there are any requirements for mandatory record keeping.



Record keeping improves producers' ability to manage manure in a way that maximizes its economic benefit while minimizing the environmental risk. For example, soil test reports allow the nutrient status of a field to be tracked over time. If an unexpected shift in soil test values is noticed, the manure management plan can be reviewed to determine the cause. Once this is known, adjustments can be made to subsequent nutrient applications.

Records should be kept for all fields that receive manure, whether they are owned by the operation or leased under a manure-spreading agreement with a neighbouring producer. Below is a checklist of the information that should be documented annually for each field that will be receiving manure:

### General Field Information

- field identification (in some provinces/municipalities the legal location and ownership may be required);
- land area available for manure application (total land area minus setbacks from watercourses and neighbours and unsuitable land, etc.);
- field sketches including labels, identification of setbacks, etc., and land area for manure application.

### Soil Information

- soil texture
- soil test reports (including as a minimum Nitrate, P and K)

### Manure Information

- manure test report or nutrient book values (including, as a minimum, moisture content, total N, ammonium N, P, K)

### Cropping Information

- crop type and anticipated yield
- nutrient requirement (from the soil test report)

### Nutrient Application Information

- amount of starter/commercial fertilizer used
- manure application rate
- manure application date
- manure application method
- custom applicator information, if applicable (name/company/contact)
- weather conditions during and immediately after application

#### Manure Equipment Calibration Information

- capacity of spreader/tanker
- application rate of a drag hose system, if applicable
- width of spread
- time to apply a single load, if applicable
- calibrated forward speed or rate of application

For complete annual record keeping, producers should keep a summary of manure applications for the entire operation. An example of the summary sheet can be found in **Appendix G**. The summary records the legal description, the field area, the manure application rate, and the total volume applied for each field.