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Farm Manures

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FARM MANURES

More than 16 million tons of farm manures valued at more than $47 million are produced on Kentucky farms each year.

Almost half of these manures accumulate in barns, feedlots, and loafing areas. A large part of this will accumulate in these areas between now and pasture time next spring. These manures must be removed from time to time and the cost of handling is unavoidable. Preserving their value and using them wisely on crops and soils that benefit from them will give a fair return on handling costs.

Preserve them by (1) using ample amounts of a bedding material that will absorb and hold the liquid portion of the manure, (2) using super phosphate fertilizers as the manure accumulates to prevent the loss of nitrogen as gaseous ammonia, (3) storing them in manure pits or deep, well packed piles with straight sides and prevent winter rains from leaching the nutrients out.

Use them on non-leguminous crops and on soils that are tilled often. Leguminous crops when well inoculated will provide their own nitrogen. Likewise, a vigorously growing legume in a grass-legume mixture will provide nitrogen for both species. Thus such crops will benefit little from the nitrogen in manures.

Organic matter is depleted more rapidly in cultivated soils than in soils covered by sod. The addition of farm manures will replace some of this organic matter.

For more detailed information see Kentucky Circular 593.

George D. Corder