

Commentary

Precise note on animal manure and trends in manure production

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DESCRIPTION

Manure can come from any animal, but it isn't all created equal. The majority of animal manure is made up of faeces. Farm Yard Manure (FYM) and farm slurry are two common types of animal manure (liquid manure). FYM also includes plant matter (straw) that has been used as animal bedding and has absorbed faeces and urine. More intensive livestock rearing techniques that use concrete or slats instead of straw bedding produce agricultural manure in liquid form, known as slurry. When used as fertiliser, manure from various animals has varying characteristics and requires different application rates. Horses, cattle, pigs, lambs, chickens, turkeys, rabbits, and seabird and bat guano, for example, all have various qualities. Sheep manure, for example, is high in nitrogen and potassium. Pig manure, on the other hand, is quite low in both. Because horses consume mostly grass and a few weeds, horse dung may contain grass and weed seeds, as horses do not digest seeds as well as cattle. Cattle manure is an excellent source of both nitrogen and organic carbon. Chicken litter, which comes from a bird, is high in nitrogen and phosphate and is coveted for both of these properties.

Other animal products, such as wool, feathers, blood, and bone, may be adulterated or polluted with animal manures. Livestock feed can be mixed with the manure due to spillage. For example, chickens are often fed meat and bone meal, an animal product, which can end up becoming mixed with chicken litter. Chickens, for example, are frequently fed meat

and bone meal, an animal feed that can contaminate chicken litter. Chicken manure is probably the finest for gardens since it contains a lot of nitrogen, which all plants require, but it must be adequately composted and aged to avoid scorching the plants. Chicken dung is a high-nutrient source that should be spread in the fall or spring after it has had time to decompose. Similarly, cow dung, which has a ratio of 0.5-0.2, is composted ahead of time for better outcomes. Sheep manure has a high nitrogen content but lower ratio in the other macro-nutrients; however, its pellet size makes it a quick waste to compost. Horse manure takes longer to digest and has a comparable composition to cow manure, but because of its larger size and the weed seeds digested by the animal, it takes much longer.

Trends in manure production

Trends in manure production mirror the trends in animal numbers. Between 1982 and 1992, there was a considerable increase in chicken meat production, a modest increase in swine numbers, and a general fall in other livestock kinds. As a result of the American consumer's shift to a healthier, leaner lifestyle, these trends often reflect changing patterns in meat demand. As important as the increase in poultry numbers is the shift in locations of production, even for those livestock kinds that are dropping in numbers. Examples include changes in the dairy and swine industries. Increases in dairy numbers in some states are more than offset by a general decline in dairy numbers in most other states, particularly those in colder climates; states with declining swine numbers between 1982 and 1992 include Florida (60.3 percent), Georgia (24.1 percent), and Missouri (24.1 percent) (20.0 percent).

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