Dry Poultry Litter Requirements

Regulations pertaining to dry poultry litter operations have undergone numerous changes over the past 15-20 years. Because of these changes, I felt it would be good to get the latest summary of regulations from the Division of Water Quality. The summary as provided by Keith Larrick, Supervisor of Animal Feeding Operations Unit with the Division of Water Quality, is presented below. I strongly encourage all poultry producers to do the very best you can to adhere to these regulations.

According to G.S 143-215.10C, dry litter poultry operations are deemed permitted. This means that while these operations do not have to apply for permits, they do have to follow a list of general requirements. A summary of these requirements is provided below.

1. All dry litter operations over 30,000 birds are required to develop and maintain a Waste Utilization Plan. An example plan and copies of the required reporting forms are available at the following website: [http://www.enr.state.nc.us/DSWC/pages/guidance_docs.html](http://www.enr.state.nc.us/DSWC/pages/guidance_docs.html). The waste plan must contain a list of fields that will be used for land application, the crops that will be grown, and the maximum application rate of each field.

2. Litter shall not be stockpiled within 100 feet of perennial streams or wells.

3. Litter shall not be left uncovered for more than 15 days. Note that even if the requirements of #2 and #3 are met, it is still the responsibility of the hauler to make sure that there is no discharge to waters of the State.

4. For land application, a setback of 25 feet from perennial streams must be maintained. However, land appliers should be aware of setbacks from all ditches and intermittent streams. Runoff of litter due to improper land application can lead to discharges which can result in violations or enforcement actions.

5. Litter shall be applied at rates that do not exceed the agronomic rate of the receiving crop. The rates may be based on NCDA&CS soil test recommendations or NRCS Standards (realistic yield expectations). For more information on realistic yield expectations, contact a technical specialist with the Cooperative Extension Service, NRCS, NCDA&CS, or your local Soil and Water Conservation District.

6. Litter shall be sampled as close to the time of application as practical, but at least within 60 days of the land application event. If manure is given or sold to a 3rd party, it is still the responsibility of the generator to conduct the waste analysis, and provide a copy to the 3rd party hauler/farmer.

The State average N content for dry litter as shown in the *North Carolina Agricultural Chemical Manual* published annually by NCSU may be used to calculate application rates in lieu of individual waste analysis; however, waste analysis is still required. Info on waste analysis procedures is available from the Cooperative Extension Service, publication number AG-439-33, *Soil Facts: Waste Analysis*, at [http://www.soil.ncsu.edu/publications/Soilfacts/AG-439-33/](http://www.soil.ncsu.edu/publications/Soilfacts/AG-439-33/)

8. Recordkeeping for dry litter poultry. All records shall be kept for three years, including but not limited to:
   - Soil test and waste analysis results
   - Land application records
   - Records of litter sold or given to a 3rd party. For litter that is given to a 3rd party, the following information must be maintained:
     - Amount of litter removed
     - Date litter was removed
     - Name, address, and phone number of the manure hauler

9. Lime shall be applied to fields as specified by the Soil Test Report to assure suitable conditions for crop growth.

10. Litter application must be stopped on a field if copper and zinc soil concentrations reach an Index level of 3,000. As a proactive measure, waste generators should begin seeking alternate fields if the level exceeds 2,000.

11. When litter is given to a 3rd party, the following requirements apply:
   - Recordkeeping requirements in #8 above.
   - A copy of the current waste analysis must be provided to the 3rd party
   - Provide a copy of these guidelines to the 3rd party.

   For dry litter operations that give away/sell all litter to a 3rd party or hauler:
   - If the 3rd party applies litter to land that is owned by the litter generator, then that land must be included in the litter generator’s Waste Utilization Plan.
   - If the 3rd party hauls all litter away, and applies it to other 3rd party fields, then the litter generator does not need to have fields listed in the Waste Utilization Plan. In this case, a plan is still needed. The plan would be similar to the format suggested in #1 above, but it would just state that all litter is hauled away.

If you have any questions please feel free to call me, James Parsons, at 910.29.2143. You may also call Keith Larrick with the Division of Water Quality at 919.715.6697.