

**Water Quality Enhancement Activity – WQL22 - On farm composting of farm organic waste**



**Enhancement Discription**

This enhancement consists of the on farm composting of organic waste produced from agricultural operations. Composted products must be reused on the farm. This includes all animal manures, livestock mortality, vegetable culls removed from the field and waste from on farm processing of agricultural products. It does not include any household waste, any hazardous waste products or bio-hazard waste products. Yard waste such as grass clippings, leaves can be included but are not required to be included.

**Land Use Applicability**

Cropland and pastureland.

**Benefits**

Composting reduces the volume of waste, kills pathogens, reduces odors and improves the cycling of nutrients. The reuse of the compost products on the farm where they were produced improves soil quality and reduces the need to bring additional nutrients on to the farm.

**Criteria**

All waste products produced on the farm must be composted. This includes:

- a. Animal manures from confined areas
- b. Livestock mortality (where state or local laws allow)
- c. Vegetable culls
- d. Waste from on farm processing of agricultural products

It does not include:

- a. Household waste
- b. Hazardous waste products
- c. Bio-hazard waste products
- d. Crop residue

Follow a composting plan that includes:

1. Balancing Carbon/Nitrogen ratio based on materials being composted
2. Management of composting temperatures
3. Mixing and compost time requirements based on materials being composted

Compost site and environmental considerations

1. Compost area to be sized according to organic material being generated
2. Runoff must be diverted from compost pad



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3. Runoff from compost pad must be directed through a grass buffer strip or other means to prevent water quality impairment

Conduct composting operations in accordance with NRCS Conservation Practice Standards *Composting Facility, 317* and *Animal Mortality Facility, 316* as appropriate. Use all compost produced on the farm as a soil amendment on the farm. Apply the compost according to a nutrient management plan that considers the crop needs, timing and rate of application.

#### **Documentation Requirements**

1. An inventory of waste products produced on the farm.
2. An estimate of the annual quantities of compost to be produced.
3. A location map showing the location of the composting facility(s).
4. A nutrient management plan for the land application of the compost.
5. Composting Plan