



REP. BARB GLEIM

FARM ODOR FACT SHEET

WHAT'S THAT SMELL?

Prevailing winds can carry farm operation odors some distance across fields and into residential areas. The most common source of odor complaints relate to the storing and spreading of:

Animal Manures

Animal manures are solid, semisolid, and liquid by-products generated by animals grown to produce meat, milk, eggs, and other agricultural products for human use and consumption.

Bio-solids (sewage sludge)

Biosolids are a product of the wastewater treatment process. During wastewater treatment the liquids are separated from the solids. Those solids are then treated physically and chemically to produce a semisolid, nutrient-rich product known as biosolids.

Slurries (muck spreading)

Slurry manure is typically generated in systems where little or no bedding is added to the excreted manure/urine. Slurry manure is typically between 5% and 15% solids. It is "thicker" than liquid manure, but cannot be stacked or handled the same way as solid manure.

Food Processing Residuals (FPR)

An FPR is an incidental organic material generated by processing agricultural commodities for human or animal consumption. The term includes food residuals, food coproducts, food processing wastes, food processing sludges, or any other incidental material whose characteristics are derived from processing agricultural products. Examples include process wastewater from cleaning slaughter areas, rinsing carcasses, or conveying food materials; process wastewater treatment sludges; blood; bone; fruit and vegetable peels; seeds; shells; pits; cheese whey; off-specification food products; hides; hair; and feathers.

Animal Composting

Composting is the microbial breakdown of organic matter to a more stable material and requires a proper "carbon to nitrogen" ratio. For smaller animals, such as poultry, pigs and sheep, a properly constructed covered structure is recommended. For a few larger animals, such as cattle and horses, a freestanding pile on a well-drained or improved surface is adequate. When managed properly, composting is convenient, affordable and requires minimal labor. Properly managed composting facilities do not have problems from rodents, predators, flies or odors.

WHERE CAN I FIND MORE INFORMATION?

[Nutrient Management in Pennsylvania \(USDA\)](#)

[Manure Management – PA Dept. of Environmental Protection](#)

[Biosolids Fact Sheet \(Federal Gov\)](#)

[Biosolids Program – PA Dept. of Environmental Protection](#)

[Understanding Biosolids Land Application in the Community An Information Sheet for Adjacent Landowners - PA Dept. of Environmental Protection](#)

[Regulation and Beneficial Use of Biosolids - PA Dept. of Environmental Protection](#)

[Biosolids Facts - Mid-Atlantic Biosolids Association](#)

[Land Application of Sewage Sludge in Pennsylvania - Biosolids Quality - PSU](#)

[Livestock & Poultry Mortality Disposal in Pennsylvania - PA Dept. of Agriculture](#)

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WHAT ARE YOU DOING TO HELP US?

I am happy to announce that bi-partisan FPR legislation has been introduced as House Bill 2393 - and I am one of the prime sponsors. The legislation would help keep farms and communities safe by managing residual food processing waste.

In the past year, residents of multiple municipalities in the Commonwealth have voiced their complaints to both my office and to the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) regarding the application of noxious food processing residual (FPR) on farmland. Residents were sounding the alarm about health and safety issues related to gas or methane odors and water runoff.

In Pennsylvania, FPR can legally be applied to farmland as an inexpensive way to increase the amount of organic matter in soil, but it can also be a way to more cheaply dispose of this waste than traditional removal. Our surrounding states have largely banned the practice, which means Pennsylvania is being targeted by out-of-state companies looking to cheaply dump their waste.

Currently, there is no other regulation or oversight at the state level. Under House Bill 2393, Farmers who are applying FPRs will need a plan and would be given guidance on application, hauling and soil testing. There would now be a central complaint system for people who object to the impact of FPR on their homes and livelihoods. The FPR manual has not been updated since June 1994 and is woefully outdated.

For the last year, I have been working with the DEP and the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture to update the Food Processing Residual Management Manual and ensure that FPR can still be applied to farmland or stored in an appropriate manner to eliminate any negative impact that it could cause.

After months of hard work and dedication, along with many state agencies and attorneys, I believe we have a great product for all concerned in House Bill 2393. [You can access the language of the bill here.](#)

HOW CAN I FILE A COMPLAINT?

All Complaints:

Call the Pennsylvania Dept. of Environmental Protection Complaints Line at **866-255-5158** or online:

<https://www.dep.pa.gov/About/ReportanIncident/Pages/EnvironmentalComplaints.aspx>

Biosolids Complaints:

Call the Pennsylvania Dept. of Environmental Protection Complaints Line at **866-255-5158** or online:

<https://www.dep.pa.gov/Business/Water/CleanWater/WastewaterMgmt/Biosolids/Pages/default.aspx>

Food Processing Residuals Complaints:

Call the Pennsylvania Dept. of Environmental Protection Complaints Line at **866-255-5158** or online:

<https://www.dep.pa.gov/About/ReportanIncident/Pages/EnvironmentalComplaints.aspx>

Animal Composting Complaints:

Fall under the jurisdiction of the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture - Region 6

To report a case of improper disposal call **(717) 346-3223** or online:

Online: <https://www.agriculture.pa.gov/Animals/AHDServices/Pages/Livestock-and-Poultry-Mortality-Disposal.aspx>

Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture Ombudsman

Mortality Composting & Good Neighbor Relations

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