



How the Alabama Certified Animal Waste Vendor Program Works

ANR-1176

A certified animal waste vendor (CAWV) is a person certified by the Alabama Department of Agriculture and Industries (ADAI) who removes waste from animal feeding operations (AFO) for land application on another site. This person is certified to be knowledgeable of Alabama Department of Environmental Management (ADEM) regulations and appropriate techniques for managing, handling, transporting, storing, and land-applying animal waste. They are also trained in the Alabama Department of Agriculture & Industries (ADAI) regulations for composting and handling animal mortality. The primary goal is to prevent animal waste from contaminating groundwater and surface water quality.

Operators of AFOs or concentrated animal feeding operations (CAFOs) are encouraged to use a registered CAWV to transport animal wastes from the production site to other locations. The CAWV offers a valuable service to AFO and CAFO operators by taking on the responsibility of keeping accurate records of what happens to animal wastes taken off-site. Additionally, they assume responsibility for compliance with ADEM and ADAI regulations and legal liability for any environmental consequences of improper management or application of such wastes. In fact, the ADEM AFO rule states, "Unless responsibility for wastes is properly assumed by a CAWV in writing, to the extent allowed by law, the owner/operator shall remain responsible for the proper disposition of the waste" (335-6-7-.26(3)).

Finding a CAWV

Registered CAWVs will have an ADAI-issued pocket card with a certification number and expiration date. A CAWV with a pocket card expiration date more than 30 days in the past is no longer registered. Registered CAWVs can be found on the Extension Alabama Animal Waste Management Web site at "ADAI Current Certified Animal Waste Vendors by County" (www.aces.edu/dept/aawm/County.php). ADAI, Animal Industries Section

(334) 240-7255, has the official list. Transferring poultry litter/animal manure by-products from one individual to another should be recorded. The transfer form: "R-9 Poultry Litter/Animal Manure By-Product Responsibility/Liability TRANSFER FORM (June 2006)," found on the Extension Web site ([www.aces.edu/dept/aawm/R-9%20Form%20\(JUNE%202006\).pdf](http://www.aces.edu/dept/aawm/R-9%20Form%20(JUNE%202006).pdf)) can be used for this purpose.

How does a person become certified?

ADAI, in cooperation with ADEM, administers CAWV certification, and Extension provides training for certification. Although the Alabama CAWV program covers vendors of all types of animal wastes, training focuses on poultry waste because it is the most common material handled by vendors in Alabama. The certification process begins with a Web-based training course in basic land application and legal responsibilities. After completing this two-hour training, the student must pass a CAWV Education Verification Exam, also available over the internet. Exam results are forwarded to ADAI for certification purposes. The training course is free of charge, but the CAWV exam requires the purchase of a "proctor" password. Additional information about CAWV training and testing can be found on the Extension Web site (www.aces.edu/dept/aawm/CAWV.php).

After receiving exam results, ADAI issues a pocket card with a certification number and expiration date. Certification is effective for up to two years, but must be renewed 30 days before or after the pocket card expiration date.

After initial certification, a CAWV must maintain appropriate records and provide reports as requested by ADAI, provide professional services, and protect the environment and public health in all operations.

What are the responsibilities and liabilities of a CAWV?

A CAWV accepts responsibility and liability for AFO/CAFO waste once it leaves the site of origin. The CAWV is responsible for ensuring the suitability of each site prior to applying waste/wastewater. This includes following the

receiving owner/operator's nutrient/waste management plan or, if there is no plan, making a "skeleton plan" for the receiving farm fields. Part of the responsibility of the CAWV is to inform landowners of the legal and regulatory requirements involved in land application of animal wastes.

What is a nutrient/waste management plan?

All AFOs in Alabama must have a waste management system plan (WMSP) incorporating Best Management Practices (BMPs) that meet or exceed USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) technical standards and guidelines. Part of this plan includes a nutrient management plan, which specifies how nutrients in animal wastes will be used. This written plan includes:

- Assessment of land application sites for potential of nitrogen and phosphorus movement into water, including a soil map, hydrologic soil groups, permeability of the soil surface, and location of streams, sinkholes, and wells. The Phosphorus Index of Alabama, (www.aces.edu/departments/aawm/PINDEXFinal2001.pdf), should be run on all fields or parts of fields that will receive animal manure, poultry litter, compost, or other organic by-products.
- Buffer requirements and available acreage, also referred to as spreadable acres, is one of the more critical calculations in planning land application of animal waste. Considering minimum application buffers reduces actual available acreage. The field area minus these buffer areas is the available acres where animal waste can be spread.
- Description of land use, including crop sequences and crop management.
- A nutrient budget that accounts for nitrogen and phosphorus, including soil test results (every 3 years), sources of nutrients, and application rates.
- Time of applications.
- Erosion and runoff control plans.

ADEM requires a CAWV, when spreading animal waste for an AFO, to follow the nutrient/waste plan. All AFOs must develop plans as part of their BMPs, although only CAFO plans have to be certified by a qualified credentialed professional (QCP). The CAWV should ask the following questions before hauling litter to a third party:

- Is there a nutrient management plan (NMP) available for the fields where I am supposed to spread the litter?
- If not, can the operator/manager provide an aerial photograph, current spreadable acres, and a current soil test report for the fields where the waste is to be spread?

If a nutrient/waste management plan is not available

If the CAWV is hauling waste to spread on property that belongs to a third party, there may be no nutrient/waste management plan covering that land. For example, row-crop farmers and cow-calf operators who are not AFOs are not required to have a nutrient/waste management plan **unless** they are using animal manure, poultry litter, compost, or other organic by-products. Even if the receiving farm has no nutrient management plan, the CAWV is obligated to follow USDA-NRCS BMPs when spreading animal waste. When there is no time to wait for someone else to develop a comprehensive nutrient management plan, the CAWV can develop a "skeleton plan" for the receiving fields.

The basic steps in developing a skeleton plan are as follows:

- With landowner permission, get an aerial photo (map) of the receiving fields from the Farm Services Agency (FSA) office.
- Mark all the features, such as wells, ditches, springs, creeks, rivers, public use areas, etc. on the aerial map, with the landowner's help.
- Make sure the buffers and filter strips for each receiving field are correct and mark them on the map.
- Use the spreadable acres shortcut for "N Rate Application" (0.6 times FSA acreage, stay 200' from water) or the "P Rate Application" (0.7 times FSA acreage, stay 50' from water) to determine the spreadable acres in each field.
- Plan animal waste/litter application only to the spreadable acres (0.6 or 0.7 times FSA acreage) based on the crop growing, nutrient content of animal manure/litter, and Auburn University Soils Lab recommendations. Use soil tests that are no older than three years for each field.

The CAWV is responsible for making sure that all work is done carefully and properly. Some hands-on tasks include:

- Calibrating equipment
- Transporting waste (no road spills, etc.)
- Using buffers
- Storing wastes, if needed, either temporarily or long-term in field, barn, etc.
- Timing and recording waste application and the NOAA weather forecast for the day of application
- Making inspections during application

Delivering litter without spreading

The CAWV is responsible for delivering litter to a proper holding facility, such as a dry stack facility or temporary storage site. Animal waste cannot be dumped in a field and legally left without proper cover from rain and weather.

The CAWV must find out ahead of delivery if the customer has a proper facility (e.g., dry stack barn) or a proper site for temporary storage (e.g., under cover). When delivering poultry litter/animal manure by-products without spreading, the CAWV must have the landowner/operator sign a routine receipt with a statement that indicates he or she understands the BMP requirements and accepts responsibility and liability for the waste being delivered. They can use the “R-9 Poultry Litter/Animal Manure By-Product Responsibility/Liability TRANSFER FORM (June 2006)” found on the Extension Web site ([www.aces.edu/dept/aawm/R-9%20Form%20\(JUNE%202006\).pdf](http://www.aces.edu/dept/aawm/R-9%20Form%20(JUNE%202006).pdf)).

Applying animal manure/litter using BMPs

Best management practices (BMPs) for land application of animal waste mean applying what the crop needs based on recent soil tests while protecting soil and water resources from nonpoint source pollution. A soil test not more than three years old is necessary. The CAWV must also have the litter nutrient content tested or use a book value that is published in the USDA-NRCS Conservation Practice Standard Code 590, Nutrient Management (www.aces.edu/department/aawm/al590.pdf).

Considering minimum application buffers will reduce the actual acreage available for application. Some ADEM requirements and NRCS buffer guidelines are 100 feet for non-operator-owned dwellings, 50 feet for solid wastes, 100 feet for wastewater along public roads, 300 feet upslope and 150 feet downslope for wellheads, and 50 feet for sinkholes and steep slopes. Wetlands, streams, and other drainageways require 50-foot buffers (100 feet for Outstanding National Resource Waters or Outstanding Alabama Waters). While the AFO rule allows wastes to be applied up to, but not over, property lines, the BMP is to stay back at least 25 feet.

One critical issue when land-applying animal waste is the potential for odor complaints from neighboring residents and neighbors who are just concerned about the environment. To maintain good relations with neighbors, the CAWV should notify them of the plan to spread waste and follow these guidelines to reduce odor problems.

- Apply early in the week (avoid weekends, when more people are at home).
- Apply early in the morning.
- Avoid applying on days when winds are blowing toward neighboring homes.
- Irrigate or spread on days with low humidity.
- Inject liquid wastes.

Good neighbors make the CAWV's job much easier. ADEM responds to all complaints about environmental pollution or failure to follow ADEM rules. If there is a complaint, the CAWV or the landowner/operator or both will be the first to be contacted or visited by ADEM.

CAWV records

Maintaining records is a necessary part of the CAWV's responsibility for proper waste utilization. Documentation is necessary on the following:

- Identification of each land application field site (ownership, total acres, net acres, crop grown, type of waste and nutrient analysis, rate per acre of waste application, date of application) and accounts of incidents such as spills or other discharges, along with descriptions of discharge quantities and their pollution potential
- Equipment inspections and maintenance activities, including inspections during application
- Any other general observations that might affect proper application techniques (temperature, wind direction, etc.)
- Delivering litter without spreading (explain ADEM rule on storing and applying animal waste).

These records must be kept for three years and be made available to ADEM and ADAI upon request. More information on records the CAWV should keep can be found on the CAWV Certified Animal Waste Vendor homepage on the Extension Web site (www.aces.edu/dept/aawm/CAWV.php).

Who do I contact for more information about the CAWV program?

For information about the CAWV program, contact your local Extension office or:

Mr. Ray Hilburn
Animal Industry Division
Alabama Department of Agriculture & Industries
P.O. Box 3336
Montgomery, AL 36109-0336
(334) 240-7255

For information on AFO/CAFO rules, contact:

Permits/Compliance Unit
Field Operations Division
Alabama Department of Environmental Management
P.O. Box 301463
Montgomery, AL 36130-1463
(334) 394-4311
Fax: (334) 394-4326
mnps@adem.state.al.us

For best management practices, contact your Animal Science and Forages or Agricultural Crops regional Extension agent, Soil & Water Conservation District office, or the NRCS.



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For more information, call your county Extension office. Look in your telephone directory under your county's name to find the number.

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