



*The University of Georgia*

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## ***BROILER TIP . . .***

### **HANDLING POULTRY LITTER AND YOUR NEIGHBORS**

Utilizing poultry production residuals such as litter is a major challenge for the poultry industry. With the urban growth and rural development that is occurring throughout Georgia, how poultry producers manage their litter will undoubtedly increase as an issue and potential source of friction between the poultry industry and residential expansion.

Sound waste management practices and attention to detail are key factors in maintaining or improving public relations between agricultural producers and the non-farm public. Proper manure handling practices are foremost in maintaining good neighbor relations and avoiding potential nuisance complaints or court action. The following are practices and suggestions that can help poultry producers maintain good relations with their neighbors as they utilize the litter that is generated on the farm.

Cover litter that is transported on public roadways to prevent spillage and blow out. Not only is it a sensible practice toward maintaining good neighbor relations, but most states by law require that any material that can blow out during transport such as poultry litter, must be covered.

Cover stored litter in accordance with best management practices for nutrient retention and water quality improvement. A stack house structure for storing litter is the ideal method for coverage. However, if such a structure is not available, cover litter with a secured tarp and locate stacked litter away from roadways and property lines to help prevent the litter stack from acting as a continuous odor and fly source near neighbors.

Know the location of all drinking water sources and maintain a minimum 100 feet buffer zone around them where litter is not applied.

Always consider weather conditions and wind direction before spreading litter. Allow a little flexibility in your spreading schedule to accommodate unfavorable spreading conditions. Windy or wet

#### **PUTTING KNOWLEDGE TO WORK**

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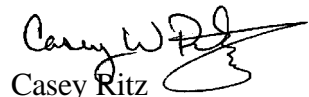
conditions can displace nutrients from the desired spot they were intended, causing poor fertilization uniformity and potential contamination problems on adjacent properties.

Spread litter in the morning hours to allow for greater odor dissipation and litter drying throughout the day. Spreading litter in the late afternoon and evening allows the still night air to trap and spread odors close to the ground, a common complaint of poultry farm neighbors.

Avoid spreading on weekends or holidays when neighbors are more likely to be in their homes or entertaining guests. Inform neighbors when you intend to spread. Be willing to be flexible with your spreading schedule to avoid disrupting special occasions such as the backyard wedding, the family reunion, etc.

Where applicable, incorporate litter into the soil as rapidly as possible after spreading to decrease the amount of odor and flies carried on the wind and to minimize potential nutrient runoff due to storm water.

Be particularly mindful of sensitive neighbors. Reward tolerant neighbors with a token of your appreciation, perhaps with free litter for their garden, a neighborhood barbeque, or something similar. Being proactive in developing and maintaining good neighbor relationships can prevent hard feelings and frustrations that all too often result in formal complaints and court actions.



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**\*\*Consult with your poultry company representative before making management changes.\*\***

“Your local County Extension Agent is a source of more information on this subject”