



CROP ALERT

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Take Stock of Manure Storage Needs

For many parts of NYS, not for the first time, March 2017 provided both deep snow and saturated wet conditions that presented significant manure related challenges, especially to daily spread and short term storage operations. While the conditions are still fresh, every operation should take stock of manure storage options and look for ways to avoid application in these situations. Over the last few weeks, I have heard more comments than usual from farm and non-farm folks alike about seeing neighbors spreading manure on barely trafficable fields or even from the edge of the road. If you find your operation in this situation, or if you strained to find fields that can hold up the tractor and spreader without getting stuck, runoff risk is likely to be high and application should be avoided whether you are a regulated farm or not. Spreading just before rain or snowmelt can be just as risky, even if a field can be driven on without getting stuck. For stackable manure in the short term, temporary pile locations can be identified with the help of SWCD, NRCS, or private sector planners until better storage options can be installed. New York State and federal cost share options are available annually; meet with your local SWCD and/or NRCS staff to start the process.

The Dairy Acceleration Program (<https://prodairy.cals.cornell.edu/dairy-acceleration>) can help with cost of engineering on farms under 700 cows. Position your operation for the future: evaluate manure storage needs and implement solutions.