



A guide to using wastes and  
recycled products on your farm

## Maximise the benefits but minimise the risks

Farmers need to be aware of waste regulations when bringing material onto their farm. Depositing unsuitable waste materials onto farmland could leave you with an expensive clean up cost, or even facing prosecution.

Waste materials are brought onto farm for a variety of purposes:

- to maintain farm tracks;
- fertilising/soil conditioning value;
- for animal bedding.

Waste offered to farmers typically includes:

- builders' rubble and soils;
- food and green wastes;
- sediment from washing processes;
- composts and digestates;

As a farmer, supplier or spreading contractor you need to make sure you follow the rules and know what you are applying to the soil or using on your farm.

## How do you keep it legal?

There are clear legal responsibilities on the producer of waste and the contractor/supplier who is providing it to you and/or spreading it on your land. An **environmental permit** or **waste exemption** is needed to supply, store or use waste material and for some activities, a specific **deployment** is needed to spread the waste. Having a deployment means that the material has been tested to make sure that it provides an agricultural benefit at a specific location and application rate whilst not harming the environment

As the person or business accepting the waste you are also bound by a 'duty of care' to ensure that the waste you are accepting meets the necessary legal requirements. If you find material which is not as described on the waste transfer note, permit or exemption, or if you suspect that the waste is not fit for purpose, you should refuse the material and contact us on **03708 506506**. We can check waste carriers' licences and permits/exemptions and may also take action against those depositing unsuitable or non-permitted materials.

# What to check?

1. Do you know what the waste is?
2. Does it need an exemption or permit and deployment?
3. Check the operator is a registered waste carrier and ask for waste transfer notes upon delivery. These should be kept as a record for at least two years.
4. Has the exemption or deployment been issued before deliveries begin?
5. Check the waste:
  - Is it what you were expecting (solid, liquid, sludge)?
  - Check each delivery to see it matches agreed specification
  - Record tonnages delivered and delivery dates
  - Are there contaminants you don't want to spread e.g. plastic, metals, stones?
6. Check the storage:
  - Is the storage site at the same place as that identified in the deployment/exemption?
  - Is the waste being stored in an appropriate location i.e. not over land drains, 10 metres from a watercourse or 50 metres from a spring or borehole?
  - Are there appropriate measures for containing leaks and spills?
  - Are free board limits being complied with?
  - Only store what you need to spread and no greater than 3000 tonnes at any one time.
  - Wastes shall be stored for no longer than 12 months under either an exemption (U10) or a permit.
  - It should be secure with no public access (footpaths etc)
7. Check the application
  - Is the application rate what crop/soil needs?
  - Is application following the Codes of Good Agricultural Practice (CoGAP)?
  - Is application appropriate for weather conditions
  - Are NVZ regulations being complied with?
  - Are steps taken to minimise impacts of odour, dust or flies?
8. Check the management of the waste operator:
  - Do you know who is responsible for ensuring the spreading is done properly?
  - Do you have their contact details?

**We want to promote the safe and lawful recovery of wastes in agriculture but we need you to exercise sensible precautions to avoid expensive mistakes or harm to you, your livestock or the environment.**

**Would you like to find out more about us, or about your environmental permit and waste exemptions?**

Then call us on

03708 506 506 (Mon–Fri 8–6)

Calls to 03 numbers cost the same as calls to standard geographic numbers (i.e. numbers beginning with 01 or 02).

email

[enquiries@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@environment-agency.gov.uk)

or visit our website

[www.environment-agency.gov.uk](http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk)



Example of a field contaminated by plastic