



Field Notes for The Week Of

3-7-22

Take Advantage of That Manure

What a week it has been! March has come in like a lamb with very mild temperatures and most importantly drier. Between February 28th till Saturday March 5th there was zero precipitation and nice drying winds helping the soil get settled enough for farmers to start some well needed field work. I received many calls this week from producers and was able to get out and make some field visits. Some questions I received this week includes forage sampling, cattle nutrition, blueberry production, starting a sheep farm, and numerous calls about applying nitrogen to winter wheat. As I talk to producers across the county, there is a common theme to our conversations, that is high input cost. Cost of producing crops or livestock in 2022 is going to be almost 1.5 to 2 times higher than 2021. From seed, chemicals, fuel, and fertilizer most everything has doubled in price from the previous year. Farmer are well known to be very creative, ingenious, and business savvy, so I have the upmost faith in the American farmer to survive these turbulent times. One way to offset some of the high fertilizer prices could be in a big steamy pile next to the feed lot!

If you are like me, it seems like about 50-60% of time on the farm involve doing something with manure. This might sound strange to some, but it is true, if you raise livestock you are either scaping manure, pitching manure, pumping manure, piling manure, and last but not least spreading manure. This past week presented a window of opportunity for producers to get some honey hauled to the field. The question at hand is manure just manure? Not all manure is created equal, rations animals are fed, bedding used, type of livestock, and storage all have an impact on the content manure will have and its value. Here is a quick breakdown of nutrient contents of different manure types.

- **Beef cattle deep bedded pack** = 8lbs/ton of Nitrogen, 4.5lb/ton of Phosphorus, and 6.6 lbs/ton of Potassium. At current fertilizer prices this would give the value of that manure an average of \$16.41/ton.
- **Sheep/Deep bedded pack** = 6.5lbs/ton of Nitrogen, 4.5lbs/ton of Phosphorus, and 9lbs/ton of Potassium. The value of this manure would be roughly \$16.50/ton.
- **Chicken Litter** = 52lbs/ton of Nitrogen, 72lbs/ton of phosphorus, and 38lbs/ton of potassium. This would give chicken litter a value of \$144.06/ton.



These numbers may seem small, but it doesn't take much time or livestock to accumulate 1 ton of manure and the value should not be ignored.