## On-site water management:

- Poor site drainage leads to ponding of water, saturated composting material, muddy site conditions, offensive odour, loss of nutrients, and excessive runoff and leachate from the site.
- The site must be set up to keep surface runoff away from compost processing and storage areas—use slope, berms, ditches, etc.
- Consider incorporating a grassed filter area or retention pond for treating compost pad runoff. Nutrients in the retention pond can be recycled via irrigation of compost piles or crop plants.
- Some compost piles might be too dry and may require additional moisture. Having easy access to water may be something to bear in mind.

Water truck used to add moisture to the windrow

Loader-mount self-propelled windrow turner

# Strike Black Gold:

# Compost!

## Nutrient management for sustainable farms

**For more information contact your local Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives Office or call the Compost Info Line.**

Compost Infoline
1-866-394-8880
*A service of Resource Conservation Manitoba*

# Compost Site Set-up

# for Windrow Composting

Resource Conservation Manitoba

Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives

Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada | Agriculture et Agroalimentaire Canada

# Site Preparation for Open-Windrow Composting

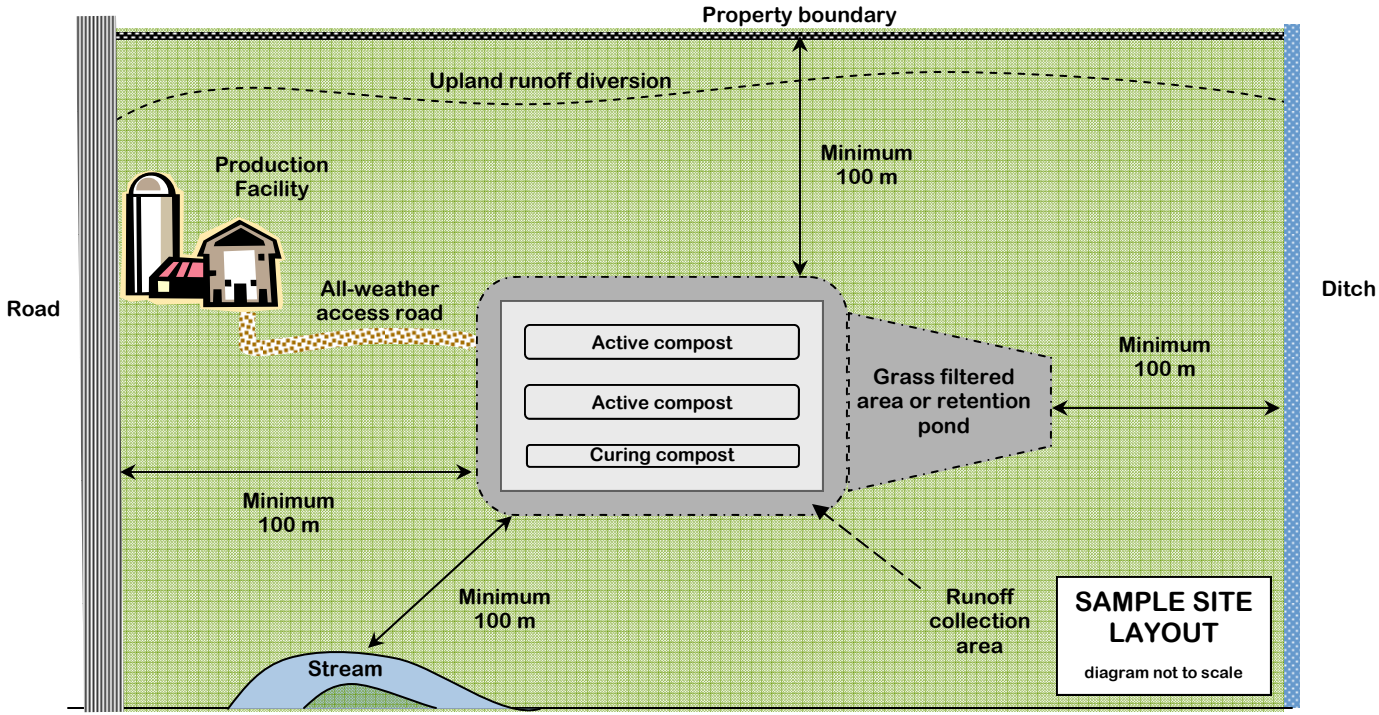
***In areas of moderate to plentiful rainfall—or areas prone to occasional severe rain events—***

***water management is key to site accessibility***

***Careful consideration must be taken when choosing a composting site. Having a properly designed compost site is the first step to any successful compost operation.***

## Site set-up:

- Site should be slightly sloped (2-4% slope) to prevent ponding of runoff and leachate in low spots or between windrows/piles.
- Mandatory setbacks: 100 m from any surface watercourse, sinkhole, spring or well, and the operation's boundary.
- Choose a location that has compacted soil or an impervious surface:
    - to reduce the seepage of nutrients into the groundwater
    - to support vehicles/machinery in various weather conditions
- If soil conditions are unsuitable, consider constructing a permanent base such as a concrete or asphalt pad.




- Consider proximity to other farm operations for easy access to hauling and storage of finished compost.
- Site area must be sized properly for the volume of material to be handled. Also, future expansions should be taken into account.
- Correct pile size for management equipment must be considered. Windrows too tall or too wide will not be turned effectively. Furthermore, space for turning and maneuvering the equipment must also be available .
- For permanent composting sites, contact Manitoba Conservation prior to construction to ensure all required approvals in accordance with the Livestock Manure and Mortalities Management Regulation are obtained.