



# MANURE EXCHANGE PROGRAM

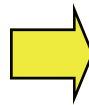
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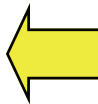


Skagit Conservation District's **Manure Exchange Program** is a community resource connecting **local farmers** who have excess manure on their site with **local gardeners/or landscapers** who need manure to improve soil in gardens and landscapes. The program is a simple, free way to recycle valuable nutrients and organic matter. We maintain a list of livestock owners and their contact information, which is available on the current [Manure Share Source List](http://www.skagitcd.org) at [www.skagitcd.org](http://www.skagitcd.org).

Are you a **livestock owner** interested in off-loading some of the manure produced on your site? Call [360-428-4313](tel:360-428-4313) so we can add you to our manure provider list.



Are you a **local gardener or landscaper** interested in obtaining free compost? Call us at [360-428-4313](tel:360-428-4313) or visit our website at [www.skagitcd.org](http://www.skagitcd.org) and click on [Manure Share Source List](http://www.skagitcd.org).



## How do you get started with the Manure Exchange Program?

- Review the program notes on back for tips on how the program works and questions to consider when selecting a manure source.
- Review the current [Manure Share Source List](http://www.skagitcd.org) on our website at [www.skagitcd.org](http://www.skagitcd.org) or call our office to sign up.

# HOW DOES THE PROGRAM WORK?

## 1. Determine Your Needs

What quality and mix of material do you need? How much do you need?



## 2. Arrange for a Truck

Make arrangements for a vehicle to pick up the manure.



## 3. Select a Source

Review the table of sources from the [Manure Share Source List](#) to find material that meets your needs and is conveniently located.

## 4. Schedule the Pickup

Call the farm that you have selected and arrange a time.



## 5. Compost at Your Site

See the links at the bottom or pick up one of SCD's pamphlets on composting.

## 6. Use as a Soil Amendment

Once composted, apply as needed in your garden or landscape as a soil amendment.



**NOTE:** The age of the manure available through the **Manure Exchange Program** varies. If you are dealing with fresh, untreated manure, please be aware that pathogens and weed seeds may not have been completely killed off. In order to make raw manure useful in the garden it will need to be composted. To do this, place the pile in a high, well drained location and cover it with a tarp for at least 60 days. The compost should stay moist, not wet, and be turned regularly to allow oxygen to enter the pile. Well oxygenated manure piles will generate high heat units to kill off pathogens and weed seeds. The end result will be dark, crumbly, and earth smelling.

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# QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER WHEN SELECTING A MANURE SOURCE

## 1. How much manure do you need?

Calculate volume needed ( depth x area). Convert to cubic yards (27 cubic feet in one cubic yard). Plan for the number of truck loads required for target volume. Note: most pickups can only handle 3/4 - 1 yard at a time. If you are getting a lot of material, chose a farm with a loader or plan to spend a lot of time with your shovel loading your truck.



## 2. Will you need to pick up manure during the winter?

Some of the farms have manure piles that are not accessible during the winter (check “Accessible” column on the [Manure Share Source List](#)).

## 3. Are you looking for “Aged” or “Fresh” material?

Older material may be closer to “finished compost” than newer material. See the “Age” column in the [Manure Share Source List](#). If you want old material, be sure to ask the farmer. Often the oldest material is at the back of pile, and the material at the front of the pile is from yesterday. Let the farmer know what you want; they may be able to load the older material for you. It is worth asking.

“Aged”

“Fresh”



## 4. What is your end use?

If mulch for landscaping; a manure pile with mostly bedding is a good choice. However, for composting for your garden, a material with little or no bedding is better choice (check the “manure/bedding” column in the [Manure Share Source List](#)). Know that some beddings will compost faster (straw breaks down quicker and cedar shavings take a very long time).

## 5. Control Weeds!

Weeds can be a real problem with some compost piles. Contrary to popular belief, horses don’t “poop” out significantly more weeds than cows. Weeds present in manure piles, are generated primarily from seeds of weed plants growing near the manure pile. Keep the pile covered with a tarp to prevent weed seed invasion and to compost the pile. The heat and time involved in composting will kill most weed seeds. Because we can’t vouch for the weed seed content of these manure piles, we highly encourage you to cover and compost this material for a month or two before applying it.