

A guide for Gisborne farmers when disposing of culled chicken and related waste impacted by avian influenza (AI).

August 2025

Introduction

This guide has been prepared for you by the Poultry Industry Association of New Zealand and Harrison Grierson.

Inside this guide you'll find information on:

- Disposal Options for your region
- General advice and **recommendations**
- Who to talk to if you have questions
- Regional rules to consider

Recommendations

1. Offal pit – will need consent,
2. Composting – will need consent.

Estimates

We estimate the following volumes and weight for carcasses + litter + manure for 10,000 birds. This is important to consider when assessing disposal options.

Layer = 29t and 35m³ Broiler = 64t and 72m³

Onsite Disposal

Disposal of waste in an offal pit will require resource consent in the Gisborne Region. **We still recommend onsite disposal in offal pits as the first disposal option** in Gisborne, as there are no nearby landfills that are willing to accept this waste. Speak to a planner first – contact details are overleaf. **We recommend you start the consent application process ASAP.**

1. What can go in an offal pit?

- ✓ Carcasses and animal material including eggs
- ✓ Only waste from the same farm holding or land with the same owner
- × Other waste (including litter, shed material, bedding) → **may be able to go to a farm dump**
- × Dairy sludge or septic tank sludge
- × Hazardous substances such as explosives or electronics

2. Check your District Rules

- Some district rules limit where and how earthworks are permitted to be done. See the attachment for further details.
- Earthworks volumes are limited to 5,000m³

If you have a volume of waste that exceeds these limits, you will need to dispose of the excess at an off-site landfill or consider another method of disposal.

3. Select an appropriate site

- ✓ Ensure appropriate buffers (described over the page) are met
- ✓ **Above the groundwater table.**
- ✓ **Elevated ground where surface water can be diverted away from the hole.**
- × No high value soils or soils containing gravel or limestone
- × **Poorly drained areas or areas prone to flooding or ponding during high rainfall.**

4. Digging your pit

- ✓ Dispose of waste as quickly as possible.
- ✓ Install erosion, sediment and dust controls as needed.
- ✓ Restore the surface to a similar state as the surrounding land.
- ✓ Securely cover – at least 0.3m. No stormwater infiltration.
- ✓ **Don't use lime as this can restrict the decomposition process.**

2 Composting

Composting will also require resource consent; farmers should check with Regional Council first. Some associated material may not be suitable for composting and may need to be taken to a landfill. Indoor composting should be sought as outdoor composting may be impacted by rain and cold temperatures.

The MPI Composting Guidelines for managing AI must be complied with.

Pros

- Leachate can be managed better for indoor composting
- May be more affordable than landfill disposal
- Provides another option where offal pit requirements can't be met.

Cons

- Increased health and safety risk due to ongoing exposure.
- Minimum 30 days to complete – this will increase the time until farmers can return to normal operation.
- Takes time to obtain a consent.
- Consider how you will dispose of or use the final product before you decide to compost – off-site use may be limited due to perception.

Consenting

- Will require a resource consent from Regional Council for large scale composting activities such as this.
- We recommend you contact a planner, details are provided overleaf.

Considerations

- The composting material must reach temperatures of 55 degrees Celsius
- Odour and leachate must be contained.
- Specialised equipment and extra staff may be required.

Offsite disposal

There are no landfills identified in Gisborne or the Bay of Plenty that accept this waste. Some associated waste (not carcasses) may be accepted at the Omarunui Landfill

Omarunui Landfill – Hawke's Bay

Contact via online form:

<https://forms.hdc.govt.nz/online-services/new/Credit-App/step/1>

A: Taylor Pass Road, Blenheim

Useful Contacts

Name	Role	Number	Email
Tairāwhiti District and Regional Council	Planner	06 867 2049	Regional.consent@gdc.govt.nz
Hali Hoskin (author)	Environmental Consultant	+64 9 2126468	h.hoskin@harrisingrierson.com
Mary McConnell	Planner	+64 3 421 6196	m.mcconnell@harrisingrierson.com
Enviro NZ	Transport	027 509 6432	Cullum.penman@environz.co.nz
N & J Wood	Transport	027 460 3223	Accounts@njwood.co.nz
Northland Waste Ltd	Transport	027 258 0532	Andrew.slater@northlandwaste.co.nz
NZ Safety Blackwoods	PPE Supplier	027 261 6397	kate.hong@nzsafetyblackwoods.co.nz

Attachment

Tairāwhiti Resource Management Plan

This guide has only considered the relevant rules from the Tairāwhiti Resource Management Plan. These rules are summarised below. Refer to the Tairāwhiti Resource Management Plan for full details.

Commentary

- On-site disposal in an offal pit or farm dump is limited to 50m³.
- Composting will require a consent as the rule does not permit waste from an industrial process.

Offal Pits - Rule 6.2.12(4)

Discharges associated with offal pits are a permitted activity subject to the following standards:

- a) Has a volume of less than **50 m³**
- b) Shall be sited and designed to prevent surface runoff and animals entering the pit;
- c) Only of dead animals or animal parts produced on the property or a property in the same ownership to where the pit is located;
- d) The base of the pit shall be no less **than 1 metre** above the highest level of the water table;
- e) No more than **one pit** is constructed or used per **100 hectares** of property area site per annum;
- f) When filled to within **0.5 metres** of the original land surface, or is no longer used, the contents are covered with soil to a depth of at least **0.5 metres** or the pit is covered with an **impermeable lid**;
- g) The pit is not located within **50 metres** of a surface waterbody, a bore used for water abstraction, the boundary of the site, or the Coastal Marine Area, or within any area or zone identified in a proposed or operative district plan for residential, commercial or industrial purposes

Farm dump – Rule 6.2.12(3)

The discharge of any contaminants into or onto land in connection with solid waste disposal at farms is a permitted activity subject to the following standards:

- a) The discharge shall consist only of household or farm wastes generated on that property, shall contain no hazardous substances and be discharged to a pit with a volume of less than **50 m³**;
- b) The discharge shall be sited and designed to prevent surface runoff and animals entering the pit;
- c) The discharge shall occur no less than **100 metres** from any river, surface waterbody, wetland, drain or channel, from any bore used for drinking water supply, from the coastal marine area, or from any Protection Management Areas identified within the Tairāwhiti Plan;
- d) The base of the fill area shall be no less than **1 metre** above the highest level of the water table;
- e) No offensive odour shall be discernible beyond the boundary of the property as a result of the discharge;
- f) There shall be no windblown litter from the site;
- g) No more than six months after the closure of the discharge site, the site shall be rehabilitated to a condition which is compatible with surrounding land uses, and does not constitute a greater hazard than the surrounding land with respect to landslip and subsidence.

Composting rule - Rule 6.2.12(6)

- h) Any fermenting or decaying organic matter does not originate from an industrial or trade process

Attachment

Resource Consents

A resource consent is not required for disposal at landfills.

If you are considering on-site disposal, such as burial or composting, you will need to assess if a resource consent is required. This attachment provides a summary of key steps for consenting.

We recommend that you seek disposal options that do not require resource consent in the first instance. Seeking consent can be expensive and time-consuming. It may take months to prepare, lodge, process and grant a consent.

Quick notes

A resource consent is formal permission from a council to undertake an activity that contravenes a rule. It is how councils manage possible effects on people and the environment.

- Poultry farms will often already have resource consent/s in place, possibly for: discharging wastewater, drawing water, constructing sheds.
- Both district and regional rules should be considered.
 - District consents – granted by district councils. Regarding land-use, development, noise, traffic and the built environment.
 - Regional consents – granted by regional councils. Regarding environmental effects – water, soils and air.
- If you contravene a rule, you may need a resource consent to undertake on-site burial or composting.

1.0 Review the rules

Before you choose your disposal option, you should assess the rules and consider if you contravene any. Relevant regional and district rules are included but not limited to those attached to this guide.

Both regional and district rules need to be considered.

It is best to check with a planner or consultant before you dispose of AI material on-site. They can check your assessment so that you can be confident you are operating with the proper approvals. Contact details are provided in the guide.

2.0 Contravene a rule

If you contravene a rule, you will need a resource consent.

You should consider contracting a planner to assist with the resource consent application process.

2.1 What consents may be required?

Consents that may be required include but are not limited to:

- District – earthworks, discharge to air (odour),
 - Regional – earthworks, discharge to air (odour), land-use (offal pits), discharge of contaminants to land where it has the potential to enter water. Some regional plans have composting rules.
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3.0 Contact the council

Either you or your planner will need to contact the regional and/or district council as soon as possible. Council contact details are provided in the guide.

1. Pre-application meeting – we recommend organising a pre-application meeting with the council. This will ensure that you are applying for the correct activity under the correct rule. The council can then flag any potential issues early.

2. Preparation of the application

A resource consent application will need to be made. This includes:

- Completed application forms
- Assessment of environmental effects
- Statutory assessment
- Notification assessment – are there any affected parties?
- Consultation assessment
- Rule assessment

4.0 Granting of the consent

Only once the consent application is lodged and then granted will you be able to undertake the activity for which consent is required.

You will be issued with consent conditions that you must comply with.

The council may undertake compliance monitoring, which would include a monitoring officer inspecting the farm before, during or after the activity. This may be to ensure that the consent conditions are being complied with.