

A guide for Southland farmers when disposing of culled chickens 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
- **Best practice tips – what we recommend**
- General advice and recommendations
- Who to talk to if you have questions
- Regional and District Plan rules to consider

Recommendations

1. Onsite offal pits (**burial**) if consent is not required.
2. Offsite disposal (**landfills**) for any remaining waste that exceeds offal pit limits or cannot be composted
3. **Compost** – if you cannot take to landfill or bury.

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 = 64 and 72m³

Onsite Disposal

1. What can go in an offal pit?

- ✓ Carcasses and animal material including eggs
- ✓ Compost bulking agent
- ✓ Waste from the farm (including litter, shed material, bedding)
- × Dairy sludge or septic tank sludge
- × Hazardous substances such as explosives or electronics

3. Select and appropriate site

- ✓ Elevated ground where surface water can be diverted away from the hole.
- ✓ Ensure appropriate buffers (described over the page) are met
- ✓ **At least 3m between the water table and the base of the hole.**
- × Poorly drained areas or areas prone to flooding or ponding during high rainfall.
- × Areas containing high value soils
- × Soils containing gravel and limestone

2. Estimate the volume

- Offal pit sizes are limited by District earthworks rules:
- Southern District = 1000m³ in total volume and 5m deep
- Invercargill City District = 2000m³ in total volume
- Gore City Council = no limits on volume

If you have a volume of waste that exceeds these limits, you will need to dispose of excess at an offsite landfill.

4. Digging your pit

- ✓ Dispose of waste as quickly as possible.
- ✓ Install erosion and sediment controls as needed.
- ✓ Restore the surface to a similar state as the surrounding land.
- ✓ **Cover carcasses with at least 1m of soil or temporarily cover with plastic and soil, until the hole is full and can be capped. Slightly mound ground after backfilling, then re-grass**

Offal Pit Buffer Distances

	50m	100m	150m	200m	250m
Waterway/waterbody – lake, river, artificial watercourse, modified watercourse, natural wetland or the coastal marine area	X				
Water abstraction point, dwelling, place of assembly, property boundary	X				
Waterway or waterbody with loose gravel	X				
Water abstraction point (loose gravel)	X				
Drinking water abstraction point	X				

Composting

Considerations

- Composting will likely require resource consent. Obtaining consent may take many months. **Because of this we recommend offal pit and landfill disposal be sought first.**
- Indoor composting should be sought. Outdoor composting may be impacted by rain and cold temperatures.
- The composting material must reach temperatures of 55 degrees Celsius
- Minimum 30 days to complete – this will increase the time until farmers can return to normal operation.
- 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
- Specialised equipment and extra staff may be required.
- The MPI Composting Guide must be followed.

Offsite Disposal

Not all landfills will accept culled chickens or bird flu-impacted waste. The green boxed landfills below have may be able to accept this waste (with adequate preparation).

Landfills will be responsible for obtaining their own appropriate consents or authorisations.

Disposal of this material at a landfill will incur additional costs on top of routine landfill costs.

Farmers should also consider transport costs.

AB Lime - Southland Regional Landfill

P: 02041132212 (Ansley Adams)

E: wastenet@icc.govt.nz

A: 10 Bend Road, Browns 9782

Kate Valley Landfill

P: 02108243882.

E: hleach@wm.nz

A: 554 Mt Cass Road, Teviotdale

3 Landfill Disposal Key Steps

1. Contact landfill operators

- Contact the landfill operator as soon as possible.
- Southern Regional Landfill requests at least two days' notice.
- Landfill operators will need to comply with the MPI Landfill Guide.

2. Estimate

The volume and weight of waste need to be estimated and supplied to truck and landfill operators.

The estimates provided offer a useful starting point, but farmers should calculate more precise figures based on the age and specific conditions of their population

3. Organize transport

- Trucks must be sealed and lined. Skips are sealed and won't need lining - just lidding.
- No leakage must be able to occur during transportation.
- Transporters will need to comply with the MPI transport guide

4. Submit Permitted Waste Application

- Applications to landfill facilities need to be made and approved prior to disposing of special waste. These cost from \$80+.
- Approval of applications depends on the level of detail provided up front.

General Advice

- If you want to dispose of waste in a way not described in this guide, please talk to a planner first. Contact details are provided below. All AI waste disposal must comply with MPI guidelines.
- Resource consents – disposing of culled chickens is time-sensitive. We recommend disposal options that do not need a resource consent.
- If your disposal method will require consent, start this application process as soon as practical.
- Disposal recommendations and advice may change – make sure that this is the most recent version before taking action

Council Contacts

Council	Stream	Contact #	Email
Environment Southland	General	0800 76 88 45	service@es.govt.nz
Southland District Council	Planning	0800 727 059	sdcc@southlanddc.govt.nz
Gore District Council	Planning	03 209 0330	planning@goredc.govt.nz
Invercargill District Council	Planning	03 211 1777	duty.planner@icc.govt.nz

Planning and Environmental Advice

Name	Role	Contact #	Email
Hali Hoskin (author)	Environmental Consultant	+64 9 2126468	h.hoskin@harrisongrierson.com
Mary McConnell	Planner	+64 21 721623	m.mcconnell@harrisongrierson.com

Attachment

Southland Regional Plan

This guide has only considered the relevant rule from the Proposed Southland Water and Land Plan¹. This rule is summarised below. Refer to the Proposed Southland Water and Land Plan Rule 43 for full details.

Proposed Southland Water and Land Plan Rule 43 – Farm landfills

- a) The discharge of a contaminant into or onto land from a farm landfill in circumstances where that contaminant may enter water is a permitted activity provided the following conditions are met:
 - i. carcasses, offal, compost bulking agents or waste is derived from the same landholding on which the farm landfill is situated
 - ii. the discharge does not include septic tank sludge, dairy farm sludge or a hazardous substance;
 - iii. the discharge does not occur within:
 - 1. the bed of a lake, river, or natural wetland; or
 - 2. a critical source area; or
 - 3. 50 metres of a lake, river, artificial watercourse, modified watercourse, natural wetland or the coastal marine area; or
 - 4. 50 metres of the main stems of the Waiau, Aparima, Ōreti or Mataura rivers, or inside flood banks of the main stems of these rivers (if flood banks are present); or
 - 5. 100 metres of any authorised water abstraction point, or dwelling, place of assembly, or landholding boundary; or
 - 6. the microbial health protection zone of a drinking water supply site identified in Appendix J, or where no such zone is identified, then within 250 metres of the abstraction point of a drinking water supply site identified in Appendix J; or
 - 7. 100 metres of a dwelling, place of assembly, or landholding boundary;
 - iv. stormwater is directed away from the discharge site;
 - v. the farm landfill does not intercept an on-farm sub-surface drain, or a spring, and is not excavated below the seasonal mean groundwater level in that location;
 - vi. as each section of the farm landfill becomes full or unused, the deposited carcasses, offal, compost bulking agents and waste material is covered with soil and the resulting soil surface is restored to a similar state as the surrounding land; and
 - vii. any carcass or offal must not come into contact with naturally formed limestone rock.

¹ The Regional Water Plan is in the process of being replaced by the Proposed Southland Water and Land Plan. The proposed plan is operative in part. Where some rules in the proposed Southland Water and Land Plan are under appeal, the corresponding rules in the Regional Water Plan still remain operative. The rules relevant to offal pits and landfills are not under appeal in the proposed plan. Therefore, only the proposed plans have been considered.

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District Plans

This section provides a summary of rules for the District Plans within Southland Region. Refer to the District Plans for the full details. There are three districts within Southland Region.

Southland District Plan

Offal Pits

Farm [landfills](#) and offal pits are activities controlled through the Southland Regional Council's Regional Plans and are permitted in the [GRUZ - General Rural Zone](#) if they comply with the [earthworks](#) and clean-fill provisions of this District Plan.

Earthworks

See **CRUZ-R1-8** for full details.

Earthworks that comply with the following conditions are considered to be a permitted activity:

- do not exceed, the disturbance of more than 1,000 m³ (volume) of land per property and
- do not alter the existing ground level by more than 5 metres in depth or 2 metres in height;
- shall not be undertaken at an elevation greater than 700m above sea level. Shall not be undertaken on slopes of more than 20 degrees and/or cause slope instability;
- shall not be undertaken on contaminated land

Invercargill City District Plan

Soil Rules

SOIL-R2 – It is a permitted activity to undertake the following earthwork activities, provided these comply with the conditions in SOIL-R3:

- The construction and operation of dead holes and farm landfills
- All other earthworks provided that the quantity of earthworks shall not exceed 2,000m³ per site in the Rural Zone

SOIL-R3 – The following conditions must be met for earthworks to be considered a permitted activity:

- There are specific requirements if earthworks are to be done in a National Grid Yard
- No more than 50m³ shall be extracted from land containing high value soils.

Gore City District Plan

No rules relating to disposal of carcasses. Refer to the Southland Regional Plan.

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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.