

Another very serious loss of fertility takes place where manure-piles are left exposed to leaching and fermentation. Over half the fertilizing value may be lost in a few months. Fermentation causes the escape of nitrogen as ammonia and rains wash out much fertility into the soil.

Manure should be taken away from the barn immediately, either into a separate shed or pit, or direct to the field. On flat land, spreading immediately on the land has much to recommend it. It saves labour and there is little loss of fertility. If the manure is kept in a pile it should be stored in a shallow concrete pit to hold the liquids from escaping. Some authorities say that, as long as the liquids are prevented from escaping, rain is beneficial rather than otherwise, in making the pile moist, thus holding the ammonia.

The overhead track carrier for manure and feed should be installed wherever possible. It is one of the conveniences of the modern dairy-barn. The track will lead out of the barn to the pit or to the manure-spreader.

Where other bedding is not available, sawdust or shavings makes a very good litter. Shavings will absorb as much liquid as straw, but sawdust does not absorb half as much, weight for weight. Sawdust and shavings manure is not as beneficial to soils as straw manure, and should be kept moist in the pile to prevent fire-hang.