



Heavy Use Area Protection

Stabilizing areas that are disturbed because of frequent and intensive use by livestock or farm equipment.

Description

This practice involves the use of concrete pads and other artificial surfaces or vegetative cover to help manage animal waste, sediment and nutrients and prevent them from entering waterways.

Benefits

- Reduces soil erosion by covering the ground surface with permanent cover, such as tough grasses, gravel or concrete.
- Improves water quality where livestock or animal wastes are concentrated. Concrete walkways or pads allow farmers to scrape up manure more easily and manage it for future use.
- Improves livestock health by providing firm footing.
- Improves air quality by reducing windblown dust.

Planning

- Have adjoining land uses and the proximity to residences, utilities, wetlands or other environmentally sensitive areas been taken into account?

- Have windbreaks been considered?
- Is the heavy use area as far away from waterways as possible? Can a vegetated buffer be planted?

Tech Notes

- Keep heavy use areas as small as practicable.
- Provide surface and subsurface drainage for disposal of runoff without causing erosion or water quality concerns.
- For heavy use areas protected by vegetation, choose appropriate plant species.
- Fence all livestock walkways.
- Collect, store, utilize and treat manure accumulations and contaminated runoff.
- Follow NRCS specifications.

Maintenance

- Inspect the area annually and after significant storm events.
- Replant vegetative areas, as necessary.