



Oklahoma State Senate

Legislative Brief

June 1998

Poultry Feeding Operations

Issue Background

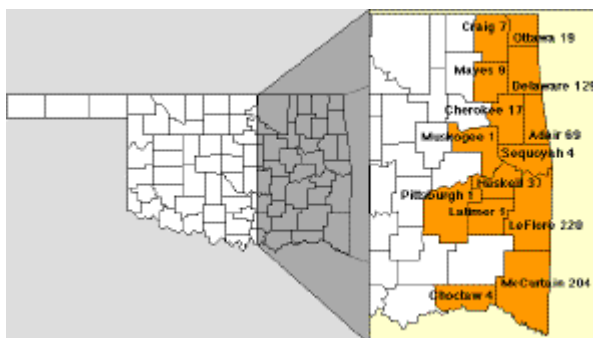
Agricultural practices and their impacts on the environment and public health have received increased attention from the Legislature, Governor, the public and industry. Public concern regarding these issues has been heightened by incidents such as contamination of drinking water, fish kills and nuisance odors, and the links of some of these incidences to agricultural practices. Of the broad range of agricultural activities, poultry operations are among those cited as adversely impacting environmental and public health.

In November 1997, Governor Keating directed a Task Force be created to develop recommendations to ensure the protection of Oklahoma's water supply from the state's burgeoning confined animal production industry (CAFOs). The Task Force realized that one large sector of confined animal production, the poultry industry, was essentially exempted from regulation.

The poultry industry in Oklahoma has grown from 120 million birds in 1988 to approximately 230 million birds in 1998 (5% increase per year). The majority of Oklahoma's poultry operations are considered "dry litter" operations, and these dry litter operations have been cited by both state and national research as sources of nutrient runoff into streams and lakes. In response to the rapid expansion of the poultry industry and the concomitant and economic concerns, the Task Force called upon the Legislature to statutorily require poultry operations to follow guidelines for waste management procedures.

Summary of Actions

Prompted largely by the recommendations of the Governor's Task Force, the release of a 1997 report that alerted officials in Tulsa and northeastern Oklahoma about the threat of phosphorus overloading in one of the state's largest watersheds, and the lack of regulated poultry waste management procedures, the Legislature enacted SB 1170 to regulate Oklahoma's rapidly growing poultry operations.



Total Broiler Production Facilities:
722

Total number of Broilers
208,843,745

Total reflected in map does not include breeder, pullet, and layer operations, estimated at 500 operations including 13 million birds.

Registered Poultry Feeding Operations Provisions

SB 1170

- Requires all poultry growers to register annually with the Department of Agriculture and pay a \$10.00 registration fee;
- Prohibits construction or operations of new poultry feeding operations without first having registered with the Department of Agriculture;
- Requires financial contributions by the state's large poultry corporations for an educational training program on poultry waste handling, conducted by the Oklahoma State University Cooperative Extension Service (contact Ross Love, Coordinator Agricultural Programs, 405/744-6550). All current and new operators shall receive no less than nine hours of training in the first year and three hours each year thereafter;

- Authorizes the Department of Agriculture to conduct annual inspections of poultry feeding operations;
- Requires standards for waste handling, treatment, management and removal;
- Authorizes the Department to set penalties and fines for violations of the act.
- Creates the "Poultry Waste Transfer Act" to encourage transfer of poultry waste out of designated nutrient-limited watersheds and nutrient-vulnerable ground water as designated in the Oklahoma's Water Quality standards.
- Creates the "Oklahoma Poultry Waste Applicators Act" which requires all commercial and private poultry waste handlers who land apply poultry waste to be certified.
- Requires soil and litter testing every three years (annually in nutrient -threatened watersheds).
- Prohibits discharge of waste waters from a point source within or outside of the state that will foreseeably enter identified eutrophic lakes.

For more information about poultry feeding operations in this state, contact Dr. James Britton, Area Poultry Specialist, OSU Extension Service, (918)647-8231).

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