

Farm Planning for Service Vehicles (Tractors and Trucks)

These practical planning and communication steps will help to avoid major issues and lost time for you and key contractors you hire

1. In setting up the farm, plan what will happen in the life of the farm, for example, allow for the following issues;
 - Fumigation treatment
 - Compost delivery and spreading
 - Goods delivery (fertilizer/s, chemicals, machinery, materials etc.)
 - Produce pick up (trucks)
 - Water drainage from tracks, stockpile areas, sheds
 - Water pipes: make sure they are located so that machines working on the farm will not break them.
2. Provide the contractor in advance with the key information about the greenhouse and surrounds – height, width of houses, turning space, other obstacles etc.
3. Allow room for tractors and trucks to get in, turn around, unload (or pick up produce) and get out again.
4. Plan the tracks, not too narrow, not too many sharp turns, the big truck and trailer units need plenty of room to get in and out.
5. Book all contractors (for the seedlings, cleaning plants out of houses, waste disposal, spreading, and ripping or rotary hoeing.) 2- 3 weeks before the job is required.
6. Be a little flexible, it is not always easy for the contractor to be there on the exact time and day. Breakdowns, weather other delays disrupt the best-laid plans and schedules.
7. Most contractors have work booked ahead; they plan ahead to do the best job for their clients. Normally they are not sitting around waiting for you call; they are hard at work down the road.
8. Fertilizer deliveries (bulk manure, gypsum, lime);
Tip the product on clean ground, no weeds, rubbish or anything to contaminate the product.
9. Don't tip fertilizer on your tracks, the 'track' material will end up inside the houses, possibly with diseases/other contaminants, or the material will be left on the track.
10. Let the contractor know about all the jobs you want to get done when they get on site, the extras jobs when they are about to leave. That's one reason they run late!

Preparation for greenhouse treatments

1. Clean 'house' of all the 'old plants, string, posts etc.
2. Remove or tie up 'strings' so they do not get caught on machines or be a hazard to operators.
3. Tie up the end panels securely (so they don't fall down when machines pass under them).
4. Remove the 'down pipes' just before the spreading or tractor work begins, (unless it is going to rain!)

NOTES

The term "fertilizer " includes all Compost's, Chicken litter, Cow manure, gypsum, lime and fertilizer mixes.

Keep in mind farm safety, don't create hazards for contractors or yourself during the operation. There is a duty of care from the property owner, just as the contractor has a duty of care to the property owner. All contractors etc. need the following things to be clearly marked:

- **Stock-pile location**, on clean ground, easy access for delivery, clear space to operate machines (forklifts, front end loaders, tractors, etc).
- **Power lines** (above ground and on the ground), don't lay electric cables along the ground, particularly on the tracks. Work sites need to have clearance with overhead power lines,
- **Water pipes** etc. bury them in dirt (trenches), not under the fertilizer stockpiles or leave them above ground so they get damaged.

Be patient and well prepared and the dramas will be much less for everyone if something does go wrong ! In the end a good contractor does their best to get there on the time/day indicated, but all machinery breaks down, If downtime occurs the contractor is generally frantically repairing the machine to keep working for you !



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