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Albers Farm Draft Permit to Operate

Albers Farm is located in Mercer County, Butler Township, at 5967 Depweg Road in Celina, Ohio. Situated in the Upper Wabash Watershed, the farm is owned and operated by Roger Albers.

The existing facility has a design capacity of 115,000 laying hens and 150 beef cattle. The laying hens are in one building that can store 2,400 tons or two years of manure in a pit under the barn. The cattle are housed in four separate barns that have the collective capacity to store 944 tons or 584 days of manure production.

Albers Farm produces approximately 590 tons of cattle manure and 1,050 tons of poultry manure annually. Approximately 200 tons of the cattle manure will be applied on 104 acres of land planted in a corn grain, corn silage, wheat, alfalfa and soybean rotation. The remainder of the manure will be distributed off the farm to cooperating crop farmers or brokers as a replacement for commercial fertilizer on cropland.

The Ohio Department of Agriculture (ODA) issued a Review Compliance Certificate (RCC) to Albers Farm in December 2004 to operate for a period of five years, after which time the facility was required to apply for a Permit to Operate (PTO) renewal. A PTO is drafted to regulate operations with plans for manure management, insect and rodent control, mortality management and emergency response. This permit is also valid for a five-year period, at which time the owner would again be required to renew the operating permit.

A complete Manure Management Plan is provided in the draft PTO, which also outlines inspections and monitoring that must be completed by the facility. An Insect and Rodent Control plan is also required to minimize the presence and negative effects of insects and rodents.

A Mortality Management Plan is required for the disposal of dead livestock. Approved methods of disposal are burying, landfilling, burning, rendering and composting. Albers Farm utilizes composting for the poultry and the Mercer County landfill for the cattle as their primary method of disposal.

An Emergency Response Plan is also required to ensure that accidents or emergencies are handled quickly and efficiently to maintain the safety of the environment, wildlife and water supplies and resources.

Finally, an Operating Record is contained in the draft Permit to Operate that includes all forms and information that must be maintained by the facility to show compliance with ODA's rules and the permit. These records include inspection of the manure storage structures, groundwater monitoring, manure characterization, land application, insect and rodent control, distribution and utilization of manure, and mortality management. These records are inspected by the department a minimum of twice annually.

