

COMMODITY

MUSHROOM

Description

Mushrooms are grown in insulated houses, consisting of several closed-system growing rooms each containing five to seven tiers of wooden or metal framed beds. Growing conditions in each room are carefully monitored and controlled. Mushrooms are picked by hand and must be shipped and refrigerated immediately. The majority of BC's white (*agaricus*) and brown (*crimini* and *portabella*) mushrooms are grown in the Fraser Valley.

Mushroom spawn is seeded into beds containing compost made from hay, straw, manure, gypsum and other nitrogen containing compounds. Mushroom growing medium may be purchased in bulk from a centralized composting operation or it may be produced by a grower on the farm.

Farm Practices of Particular Interest

Practices for specific farm activities can be found in the Farm Practice section of this reference guide. Farm practices that are of particular interest to mushroom production include:

Compost Production

Mushroom growers may compost agricultural waste and other additives on their farms to produce mushroom growing media.

See Farm Practice: [Composting](#)

Equipment Use

The production of mushrooms requires the operation of equipment (up to 24 hours a day) for growing, grading, packing, cooling mushrooms and for maintaining and operating the production facility.

See Farm Practice: [Mobile Equipment](#)
[Stationary Equipment](#)

Farm Buildings

Mushroom producers require buildings to produce and store mushrooms, protect equipment, store fertilizers and pesticides and to make or store compost.

See Farm Practice: [Storage of Hazardous Material](#)
[Storage of Farm Supplies and Products](#)
[Structures](#)
[Ventilation](#)

Transportation

Mushroom growers may have vehicles making deliveries and hauling products away 24 hours a day. Farmers must supply adequate areas on the farm property to service the volume, movement and parking of trucks and other traffic related to the activities and production of the farm. Operations, which sell direct to the public, must provide adequate parking for customers to park off the road.

See Farm Practice: [Direct Farm Marketing](#)
[Transportation](#)

Waste Management

Used mushroom growing media may be stored on the farm and applied to crop land as a fertilizer.

See Farm Practice: [Fertilizers and Soil Conditioners](#)
[Storage of Farm Supplies and Products](#)

Water Management

Uncontaminated stormwater runoff from farms may enter municipal drainage systems providing that a stormwater management plan has been prepared in accordance with local government bylaws.

Wastewater or other contaminated runoff cannot be discharged to ditches or streams. Contaminated runoff or wastewater must be collected and applied to vegetated land at an appropriate time and rate or under a permit from the Ministry of Water, Land and Air Protection treated and discharged.

See Farm Practice: [Fertilizers and Soil Conditioners](#)
[Stormwater Management](#)

Legislation

Agricultural producers are expected to follow all legislation that pertains to their farming operation. The *Farm Practices Protection (Right to Farm) Act* stipulates that the farm operation must meet the *Health Act*, *Pesticide Control Act*, *Waste Management Act* and the regulations under those acts. Information on federal and provincial legislation can be found in Appendices B and C.

Acts that pertain to specific farm activities are listed in the farm practices section of this reference guide. Local government bylaws may also apply to some farm practices. Acts that are not referenced elsewhere that are of special interest to mushroom producers include the following:

Federal

Fisheries Act – prohibits the discharge of deleterious substances (i.e., agricultural wastes, fertilizers) into waters frequented by fish

Provincial

Waste Management Act – protects environment (soil, water & air) from pollution

Mushroom Composting Pollution Prevention Regulation – minimum standard for composting

Local Government

Applicable *Stormwater Bylaws* where in place

Publications

Publications that provide information on mushroom production include, but are not limited to, the following (refer to Appendix D for details):

British Columbia Environmental Farm Plan Reference Guide

BC Agricultural Composting Handbook

Mushroom Production Guide