



State of Wisconsin  
2025 - 2026 LEGISLATURE

LRB-0065/1

JAM:klm

## 2025 SENATE BILL 78

February 26, 2025 - Introduced by Senator JACQUE, cosponsored by Representatives MURSAU, BEHNKE, MURPHY, SUBECK and TUSLER. Referred to Committee on Agriculture and Revenue.

**AN ACT** *to renumber* 94.64 (1) (a); *to amend* 94.64 (3m) (a) (intro.), 94.64 (3m) (a) 1., 94.64 (9) (c), 94.65 (4) (a) (intro.) and 94.65 (4) (b); *to create* 94.64 (1) (ag), 94.64 (1) (u), 94.64 (2) (f), 94.64 (3m) (a) 3., 94.65 (1) (bm), 94.65 (1) (fm) and 94.65 (5m) of the statutes; **relating to:** the distribution and labeling of fertilizers and soil or plant additives produced from manure.

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### ***Analysis by the Legislative Reference Bureau***

This bill makes the following changes to requirements that apply to fertilizers and soil or plant additives that are produced from converting manure into compost or vermicompost and their derivatives:

1. The bill allows a person to distribute a fertilizer that is produced from converting manure into compost or vermicompost and their derivatives and that has a combined weight of nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium that is less than 24 percent of the total weight of the fertilizer. Current law requires a fertilizer distributed in this state to be guaranteed to contain a combined weight of nitrogen, phosphorous, and potassium that is at least 24 percent of the total weight of the fertilizer, unless either 1) the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection promulgates a rule exempting the fertilizer; or 2) DATCP grants a

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permit authorizing the distribution of the fertilizer as a nonagricultural or special-use fertilizer.

2. The bill also exempts a fertilizer that is produced from converting manure into compost from being required to contain a minimum amount of certain plant nutrients. Additionally, under the bill, a label, invoice, or statement accompanying fertilizer produced from converting manure into compost is allowed to represent the amount of plant nutrients or other beneficial substances contained in the fertilizer if the truthfulness of the representation is substantiated by a typical analysis or other scientifically validated analytical method.

3. Under the bill, DATCP may not require a controlled experimental field test to substantiate the efficacy and usefulness of a soil or plant additive produced from converting manure into compost. Under current law, DATCP may require the efficacy and usefulness of a soil or plant additive to be substantiated by controlled experimental studies using the soil or plant additive.

4. The bill allows the truthfulness of a statement on a permit application or label of a soil or plant additive produced from converting manure into compost to be substantiated by a typical analysis. Current law requires the label of a soil or plant additive to make a guarantee about the minimum amount of the substances that it contains.

For further information see the state fiscal estimate, which will be printed as an appendix to this bill.

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***The people of the state of Wisconsin, represented in senate and assembly, do enact as follows:***

**SECTION 1.** 94.64 (1) (a) of the statutes is renumbered 94.64 (1) (ar).

**SECTION 2.** 94.64 (1) (ag) of the statutes is created to read:

94.64 (1) (ag) “Beneficial substance” means a substance other than a plant nutrient that improves the nourishment of cultivated plants or improves the physical, chemical, or biological properties of soil.

**SECTION 3.** 94.64 (1) (u) of the statutes is created to read:

94.64 (1) (u) “Vermicompost” means a mixture of composted materials and worm castings produced from a composting process that uses earthworms.

**SECTION 4.** 94.64 (2) (f) of the statutes is created to read:

94.64 (2) (f) Notwithstanding pars. (a) 3. and 4., (b) 5. and 6., and (e), all of the

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following apply to a label or written or printed invoice or statement pertaining to a fertilizer produced from converting unmanipulated animal or vegetable manure into compost or vermicompost and their derivatives:

1. If the label, invoice, or statement includes a typical analysis, as defined in s. 94.65 (1) (fm), of the plant nutrients contained in the fertilizer, the label, invoice, or statement is not required to include a grade or guaranteed analysis for a plant nutrient.

2. If the truthfulness of a representation made by a label, invoice, or statement about the amount of plant nutrients contained in the fertilizer is substantiated by a typical analysis, as defined in s. 94.65 (1) (fm), or other scientifically validated analytical method, the representation is not required to be substantiated by a guaranteed analysis.

3. If the truthfulness of a representation made by a label, invoice, or statement about the amount of beneficial substances contained in the fertilizer is substantiated by a typical analysis, as defined in s. 94.65 (1) (fm), or other scientifically validated analytical method, the representation is not required to be substantiated by a guaranteed analysis.

**SECTION 5.** 94.64 (3m) (a) (intro.) of the statutes is amended to read:

94.64 (3m) (a) (intro.) No person may distribute mixed fertilizer in which the sum of the guarantees for nitrogen, available phosphate, and soluble potash totals less than 24 percent unless any of the following applies:

**SECTION 6.** 94.64 (3m) (a) 1. of the statutes is amended to read:

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94.64 (3m) (a) 1. The mixed fertilizer is exempted from this requirement by department rule; ~~or~~ under sub. (9) (g).

**SECTION 7.** 94.64 (3m) (a) 3. of the statutes is created to read:

94.64 (3m) (a) 3. The mixed fertilizer is produced from converting unmanipulated animal or vegetable manure into compost or vermicompost and their derivatives.

**SECTION 8.** 94.64 (9) (c) of the statutes is amended to read:

94.64 (9) (c) Governing methods of sampling, testing, examining and analyzing fertilizer, except that no rule under this paragraph may exclude the use of typical analysis, as defined in s. 94.65 (1) (fm), or other scientifically validated analytical methods for substantiating the truthfulness of representations made under sub. (2) (f) 2. or 3.

**SECTION 9.** 94.65 (1) (bm) of the statutes is created to read:

94.65 (1) (bm) “Compost-based soil or plant additive” means a soil or plant additive that is produced from converting unmanipulated animal or vegetable manure into compost or vermicompost, as defined in s. 94.64 (1) (u), and their derivatives.

**SECTION 10.** 94.65 (1) (fm) of the statutes is created to read:

94.65 (1) (fm) “Typical analysis” means an analysis of contents that is based on the average amount of substances contained.

**SECTION 11.** 94.65 (4) (a) (intro.) of the statutes is amended to read:

94.65 (4) (a) (intro.) As a condition to the issuance of a permit or amended

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permit under sub. (3), the department, subject to sub. (5m), may require that the applicant substantiate, by scientific evidence:

**SECTION 12.** 94.65 (4) (b) of the statutes is amended to read:

94.65 (4) (b) ~~The~~ Subject to sub. (5m) (a), the department may require that the substantiation under par. (a) 1. include replicable results of controlled experimental studies using the soil or plant additive, the names and qualifications of the researchers performing the studies and a complete description of the conditions and procedures of the studies.

**SECTION 13.** 94.65 (5m) of the statutes is created to read:

94.65 **(5m)** COMPOST-BASED SOIL OR PLANT ADDITIVES. (a) The department may not require that the substantiation under sub. (4) (a) and (b) related to a compost-based soil or plant additive include a controlled experimental field test.

(b) If the truthfulness of a statement on a proposed soil or plant additive label or in a permit or amended permit application is substantiated by a typical analysis and the proposed soil or plant additive is a compost-based soil or plant additive, the department may not require the truthfulness of the statement to be substantiated by a guaranteed analysis.

(c) Notwithstanding sub. (5) (f), if a compost-based soil or plant additive is labeled with a typical analysis of its contents, the compost-based soil or plant additive is not required to be labeled with a guaranteed analysis of its contents.

**(END)**