



Hogfuel and Woodchips Footing Installation

Surface the heavy use area with hog fuel or pole peelings and an interface layer of straw or newspaper to create a firm, level surface for your livestock throughout the winter. By using footing material, you will reduce the amount of mud produced in the winter in heavy traffic areas.

The following describes the process for installing footing material with an interface layer.

1. Remove all manure from the area to be covered.
2. Scrape the area until firm ground is reached.
3. Apply interface layer, if desired. Alternatively, quarry spalls as a base material will provide stable footing and act as an interface layer.

The interface layer consists of either straw or newspaper. This layer acts as a barrier between the wood footing material and the soil surface. This helps to prevent mixing of the footing material and soil throughout the winter thereby prolonging the life of the footing material. Both straw and newspaper can be composted with your manure waste.

Straw as an interface layer. Divide the straw bale into flakes. Water damaged straw and hay work better and are typically less expensive. Lay the straw down like tile. The area should look as if it had been tiled with straw when you are done.

Newspaper as an interface layer. First, remove all slick material from the newspaper. Lay the newspaper down in whole pieces to a depth of 2 to 3 inches. Be sure to cover the entire area.

4. Apply hog fuel or pole peelings to a depth of 18-24 inches. Although this seems like a lot, it will compact to a depth of 5-6 inches in a couple of weeks. The depth of footing material will provide a firm, level, and dry surface for your livestock all winter long.
5. Use the heavy use area for confinement when pastures are too wet to graze or if the grass is not tall enough to graze.

Be sure to cover the entire area with the interface and surfacing materials. To prolong the life of the footing materials, manure should be picked on a regular basis (preferably daily). The footing materials should be placed prior to wet conditions. Ideally, completion should take place before mid-September.

This material should last at least two years with minimal maintenance the second year. After the material has degraded to the point that it will no longer function, all the material should be scraped off and placed in bins to further compost it. NEVER place new footing material on top of old material. This will lead to a worse problem than the initial mud.