

## Study of Manure Properties for the Development of FYM Basal Applicator

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### ABSTRACT

As the population of our country is increasing day by day, there is a need to supply food to each and every individual. It can be done by increasing the productivity of the crop by supplying enough nutrients to soil with organic manures. Though the chemical fertilizers increase the productivity, it deteriorates the soil qualities and causes imbalance in chemical equilibrium. So application of organic manures is the only way out. Farmers usually follow manual manure application practices which involve lot of drudgery for its field application. Physical properties of the manure affected the manure discharge rate through the blower. Denser manure gets deposited at the corners and on the other hand less dense manure creates drift due to atmospheric wind. A study was conducted to determine the physical properties of manure to

develop a machine for Farm Yard Manure (FYM) pulverizer cum applicator. Bulk density of the dried manure was found out as 195, 492 and 520 kg m<sup>-3</sup> for cow dung, goat faecal pellets and neem cake respectively. Sun dried manure was preferred for clump free pulverization. Tapped density of the dried manure was found out as 308, 668 and 748 kg m<sup>-3</sup> for cow dung, goat faecal pellets and neem cake respectively. Angle of repose was found out as 43±0.1, 37±0.1 and 38±0.1 deg for cow dung, goat faecal pellets and neem cake. Optimum angle of repose of pulverized manure helped in easy flow ability, suction and conveying of manure. Results from the study indicated the need of developing an air tight casing for the pulverizer cum blower to prevent the effect of wind. Coefficient of friction and degree of pulverization also played an important role in optimizing the blower speed to dissipate the powdered manure directly to the soil.

**Keywords** Physical properties of manure, Pulverization, Basal applicator, FYM applicator.

### INTRODUCTION

Manures viz., Farm Yard Manure (FYM), vermi-compost, edible oil cake are important sources which provide nutrients that could reduce the cost of chemical fertilizer and improves the crop growth and performance. A well-managed manure is a valuable resource in providing nutrients for crop production. Use of FYM and other organic manure is the way out to overcome the problems of soil degradation, loss of fertility and soil health (Reddy and Reddy 2017)

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(Elizabeth *et al.* 2012). A larger portion of nitrogen is made available, as and when the FYM decomposes. Application of FYM improves soil fertility, therefore there is a wide scope for its application. Also, the application of recommended doses of manures at the proper time would stabilize the soil fertility status and hence improves soil productivity.

Manure gets decomposed as soon as it is applied on the soil by the action of microorganisms present in the soil (POP 2016). To speed up the decomposition process, it is necessary to break up the manure clods and make more surface area exposed to the microorganisms. Lesser the manure clod size, better the surface area exposed for the attack of microorganisms (Julienne *et al.* 2010). Also scientific studies revealed that the fine powder is easily absorbed by the soil, easy to handle due to decreased volume and more nutrient concentration in less weight (Jotautiene and Bivainis 2017). Problems like drift and drudgery caused in manual manure application results in health problems. Improper and inaccurate broadcasting causes abnormal and non-homogeneous soil fertility which is against to the purpose of sustainable agriculture. Hence, there is a need of using innovative manure pulverizer and applicator machines in the farm (Choudhary *et al.* 2016). A study was hence conducted to determine the physical properties of manure towards the development of pulverization cum applicator unit (FYM basal applicator).

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

### Manure requirements of different soils

As agriculture is facing the problems of soil degradation, loss of fertility and soil health, the use of farm manure and organic materials is the only an apt solution. A larger portion of nitrogen is made available when the manure decomposes. Availability of potassium and phosphorus from manure is similar to that of inorganic fertilizers in terms of nutritional content (Pabitra 2011). Application of manure improves soil fertility, hence there is wide scope to its application. The application rate of various manure was observed for different crops according to the agronomic conditions of Kerala state. The components of the proposed machine were developed to suit the various dosages

of manure without much variation in the distribution efficiency.

### Physical properties of manure

Physical properties of manure directly affect the pulverization capacity, design of blower and manure dissipation (Sahay and Singh 2001). Less dense nature of the manure results in decreased pulverization capacity and application rate and on the other hand as the moisture content increases it retards the pulverization process. The important physical properties of pulverized manure are moisture content, bulk density, angle of repose, terminal velocity and coefficient of friction. The detailed procedure for measurement of physical properties of pulverized manure is described below.

#### Bulk density

Bulk density affects the handling of manure in machine. The bulk density of a powder is the ratio of the mass of an untapped powder sample and its volume including inter particulate void volume. The bulk density is expressed in kilogram per cubic meter. A 50 ml empty cylinder ( $W_1$ ) was weighed and the volume of the cylinder was measured. The manure sample was allowed to flow freely into the measuring cylinder until it overflow. The excess powder was scraped carefully from the top of the cylinder. The cylinder and the sample were then weighed ( $W_2$ ). This procedure was followed for 3-5 replications. The bulk density was calculated as the weight of sample by the volume of cylinder and is given by the following expression.

$$\text{Bulk density, } D_b = \frac{W_2 - W_1}{V} \dots\dots\dots(1)$$

where,  $W_1$  = Weight of the cylinder (g)

$W_2$  = Weight of the cylinder and sample (g)

$V$  = Volume of the cylinder ( $\text{cm}^3$ ) =  $\frac{\pi}{4} \times d^2 \times h$

$h$  = Height of the cylinder, cm

#### Tapped density

Tapped density is an increased bulk density attained

after mechanically tapping a container containing the powder sample. It is the ratio of the mass of powder to the volume occupied by powder after it has been tapped for a defined period of time. Tapped density of a powder represents its random dense packing. The initial weight of the cylinder ( $W_1$ ) was determined. The cylinder was then filled with manure and tapped continuously to get a constant volume. Measure the final height of cylinder and calculated the tapped volume. Tapped density is given by the expression,

$$\text{Tapped density, } D_t = \frac{W_2 - W_1}{V} \dots\dots\dots(2)$$

where,  $W_2$  = Weight of the container and sample (g)  
 $W_1$  = Weight of the container (g)  
 $V$  = Volume of the container ( $\text{cm}^3$ )

### Moisture content

The moisture content of manure was determined by using hot air-oven method. 5g of sample was weighed and taken in the tare porcelain dish ( $W_1$ ). The sample was placed in the oven at  $105 \pm 2$  °C for 24 h, and then it was cooled in the desiccators. Oven dried sample weight was noted ( $W_2$ ). Moisture content was measured in dry basis and is determined using the following equation (Sahay and Singh 2001).

$$\text{Moisture content (\%)} = \frac{W_2 - W_1}{W_2} \times 100 \dots\dots\dots(3)$$

where,  $W_1$  – Initial weight of the sample (g)  
 $W_2$  – Final weight of the sample (g)

### Angle of repose

Angle of repose is the angle between base and slope of the cone formed on free vertical fall of the mixture to the horizontal plane. It is the ability of the product to flow and each product has its own angle of repose. The size, shape, moisture content and orientation of particles influence the angle of repose. It was measured using an apparatus which consisted of a metal conical funnel with an open bottom, fixed on a metal stand and below an iron disc on which various diameters were marked. Sample was filled in the funnel and allowed to heap freely on iron disc from open bottom.

The height and diameter of the cone were measured. Angle of repose was determined using the following equation (Sahay and Singh 2001).

$$\text{Angle of repose, } \theta = \tan^{-1} (2h/d) \dots\dots\dots(4)$$

where,  $\theta$  = Angle of repose in degree  
 $h$  = Height of the cone, cm  
 $d$  = Diameter of the plate, cm

Angle of repose of the pulverized manure plays an important role in deciding the flow angle while fabricating the conveying chamber for pulverizer cum applicator. Higher value of angle of repose results in more free flowing of powdered manure whereas lesser value of angle of repose results in clogging.

### Coefficient of friction

Coefficient of friction apparatus consists of a horizontal plane and a bottomless open container and a pan. Known weights of manure were taken in the container. The weights were added in the pan and the instant at which the pan weight exceeds the manure; the container starts to slide movement. The coefficient of friction measures both external and internal contact of manure with horizontal plane. Hence, coefficient of friction is more important for sliding the manure over a sheet as compared to angle of friction. Following equation is used for determination of coefficient of friction (Singh and Singh 2014).

$$\mu = \frac{F}{N} \dots\dots\dots(5)$$

where,  $\mu$  = Coefficient of friction,  
 $F$  = Frictional force (force applied), kg and  
 $N$  = Normal force, kg (weight of the manure)

### Degree of pulverization

The finer the particles will be easier to decompose in soil. Pulverization performance is evaluated by calculating mean width diameter (MWD) of the manure samples. By varying the input engine rpm and interchanging the pulleys, the blade rotation increases which increases its pulverization capacity.

It was calculated by performing sieve analysis with standard sieves in the mechanical sieve shaker. The sieves used for fine sieve analysis were 2.0 mm, 1.0 mm, 600, 425, 300, 212, 150 and 75 IS sieves. Weight of sample retained on each sieve was noted. Degree of pulverization is measured by,

$$MWD = \sum_{i=1}^n \frac{W_i}{W} D_i \dots\dots\dots(6)$$

where,  $W_i$  = Weight of the soil gathered in each grade, g  
 $W$  = Total weight of the soil sieved, g  
 $D_i$  = Mean diameter referred to each grade, mm  
 $n$  = Number of grades

**Statistical analysis**

Triplicate analysis of the data was done using IBM SPSS (International business machines-statistical package for social sciences) software. Analysis of variance was performed by the ANOVA procedure. A level of significance of  $p < 0.05$  was used throughout the analysis.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

Physical properties of manure effect the pulverization capacity as well as application rate. Bulk density, tapped density, moisture content, angle of repose, coefficient of friction and degree of pulverization were determined and results are described below.

**Bulk density**

Bulk density of manure was found out as  $195 \text{ kg m}^{-3}$

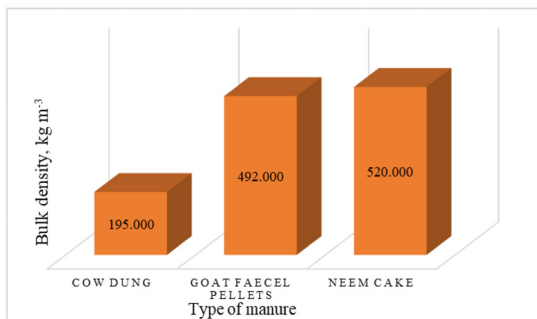


Fig. 1. Bulk density of cow dung, goat faecal pellets and neem cake.

Table 1. Analysis of variance on bulk density.

	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig
Between groups	.329	2	.164	115.822	.000
Within groups	.009	6	.001		
Total	.337	8			

for cow dung,  $492 \text{ kg m}^{-3}$  for goat faecal pellets,  $520 \text{ kg m}^{-3}$  for neem cake. Bulk density of cow dung was found to be very less compared to goat faecal pellets and neem cake (Fig. 1). For a given volume of the cylinder, less weight of the manure occupies more volume resulting in a lesser bulk density. Also, it effects the application rate of manure for a given time period. Bulk density had a significant effect on pulverizing capacity at 5 % level of significance ( $p \leq 0.05$ ) and having the R-squared value of 0.99 (Table 1).

**Tapped density**

Tapped density of manure was determined and found out as  $308 \text{ kg m}^{-3}$  for cow dung,  $668 \text{ kg m}^{-3}$  for goat faecal pellets,  $748 \text{ kg m}^{-3}$  for neem cake (Fig. 2). Manure becomes dense inside the chute because of continuous deposition of manure. Hence tapped density was determined as a measure of dense nature of manure. The analysis of variance shown that the effect of tapped density on pulverizing capacity and application rate had significant at 5 % level of significance ( $p \leq 0.05$ ) and the R-squared value was 0.97 (Table 2).

**Moisture content**

The moisture content of manures viz., cow dung, goat faecal pellets and neem cake were measured by oven

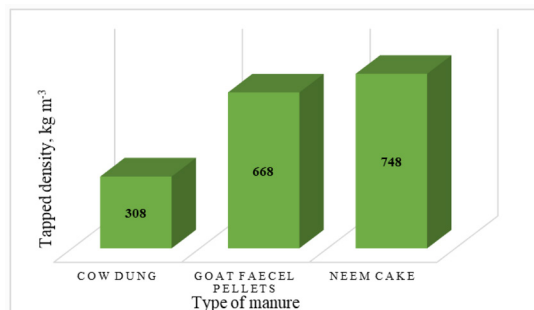


Fig. 2. Tapped density of cow dung, goat faecal pellets and neem cake.

**Table 2.** Analysis of variance on tapped density.

	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig
Between groups	.329	2	.164	115.822	.000
Within groups	.009	6	.001		
Total	.337	8			

dry method and were statistically analyzed. Increase in the moisture content of manure causes decrease in the efficiency due to adhesion nature of manure. When moisture content of manures exceeds 25 % wet lumps were formed affecting the pulverizer capacity. Cohesive nature of manure turns into adhering nature and sticks to side walls of pulverizer drum due to rotation of pulverizing blade. Statistical analysis of the data was done using IBM SPSS. The average moisture contents for different manure types were as shown in Table 3.

From analysis of variance (Table 4), it was noted that the effect of moisture content on pulverizing capacity and application rate had shown significant at 5 % level of significance ( $p \leq 0.05$ ) and the R-squared value was 0.94.

The average values of moisture content were found to be 19.04 % for cow dung, goat faecal pellets and 21.03 % for neem cake respectively. When the moisture content is more than 25 % the cohesive and adhesive nature of manure effects the suction and discharge through the blower. Wet manure showed sticky nature with impeller and wall of blower casing, which ultimately clogged the inlet and outlets. Sun-dried manure exhibited good performance compared to shady stored manure.

### Angle of repose

Angle of repose plays an important role in design and

**Table 3.** Average moisture content of pulverized manure.

	Cow dung	Goat faecal pellets	Neem cake
Moisture content	19.04	19.04	21.02
95 % confidence interval			
Mean	Std error	Lower bound	Upper bound
17.77	0.31	17.00	18.54

**Table 4.** Analysis of variance of moisture content.

	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig
Between Groups	38.222	2	19.111	21.500	.001
Within Groups	5.333	6	.889		
Total	43.556	8			

development of hoppers and chutes and has considerable effect on the sliding of manure. Pulverized cow dung gets accumulated in the hopper since it occupies more volume with less weight, whereas goat faecal pellets and neem cake gets dissipated as quickly as possible because of its less volume to weight ratio. Angle of repose was found out to be  $43 \pm 0.1$  deg for cow dung,  $37 \pm 0.1$  deg for goat faecal pellets and  $38 \pm 0.1$  deg for neem cake. Since the pulverized mixture was finer, angle of repose increased with the decrease in particle size of powder. These results were used in the design and development of hopper, casing and outlets for application unit.

### Coefficient of friction

The coefficient of friction of pulverized manure (viz., cow dung, goat faecal pellets and neem cake) for GI sheet, mild steel and aluminium was determined and results were presented in Table 5.

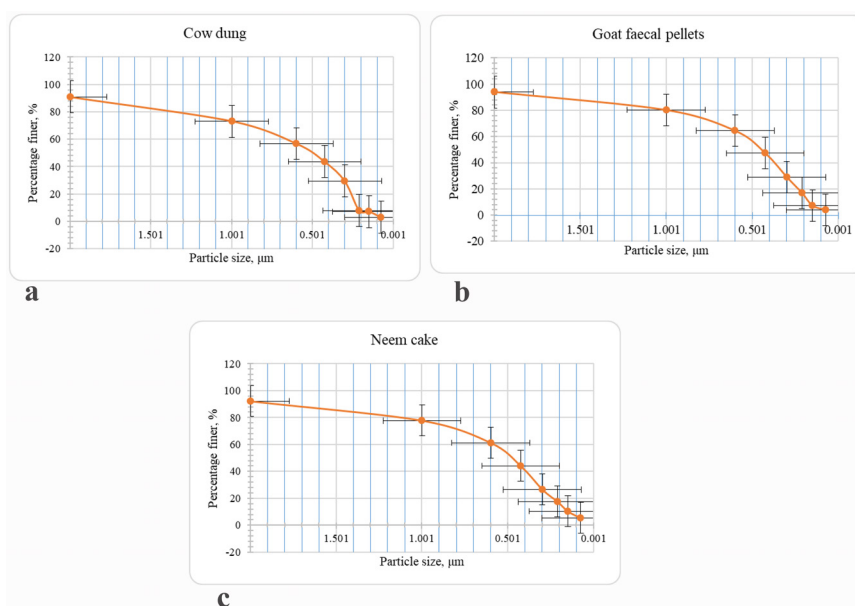
Forward motion and vibration in the machine during field operation helps in keeping pulverized manure at motion, not allowing it to reach its maximum permissible angle of repose. Increase in the moisture content of manure makes manure sticky and gets clogged in the working unit. GI sheet was selected considering strength, cost and fabrication easiness compared with other metals.

### Degree of pulverization

Degree of pulverization or fineness of manure was de-

**Table 5.** Coefficient of friction of pulverized manure.

Material surface	Cow dung	Goat faecal pellets	Neem cake
		Mean $\pm$ SD	
GI sheet	$0.478 \pm 0.01$	$0.458 \pm 0.02$	$0.453 \pm 0.01$
Mild steel	$0.525 \pm 0.02$	$0.502 \pm 0.01$	$0.494 \pm 0.01$
Aluminum	$0.540 \pm 0.01$	$0.546 \pm 0.01$	$0.552 \pm 0.02$



**Figs. 3a.** Particle size distribution in cow dung, **3b.** Particle size distribution in goat faecal pellets, **3c.** Particle size distribution in neem cake.

terminated by sieve analysis as explained and obtained data was represented in semi-log graphs as shown in Figs. 3a - 3c. Particle size distribution curves of manure indicated the fineness of manure at respective sieve sizes. Fineness of the manure increased with increased rotation of the blade and has a little effect on discharge.

### Particle size distribution

Particle size distribution curves of selected manure samples indicated the fineness of manure at respective sieve sizes (Figs. 3a - 3c). Fineness of the manure increased with increasing rpm of the blade and has a little effect on discharge. Increase in the rotational speed of the blade affected the fineness of manure irrespective of its discharge. Degree of pulverization increased with increasing the velocity ratio between the driver and driven pulleys.

Since pulverization chamber uses a 5mm sieve, the particle size varied between 4mm and 75µm. Particle size distribution of manure was fine with increase in engine/rotating blade speed. Fine powdered manure helps in easy decomposition into soil but gets affected with drift. To overcome the drift, an air sealed blower casing that can withstand heavy pressure inside and

outside the chamber was recommended. Pulverized cow dung was finer because of its less dense nature and easily gets effected by atmospheric wind.

Degree of pulverization also effects the application rate of manure in the field due to atmospheric wind (Table 6). Increase in the rotational speed of blade increases the degree of pulverization with fine pulverized manure. When the air velocity is greater than the terminal velocity of manure, it lifts the particles such that air velocity could be adjusted to a point just below the terminal velocity. Pulverized manure is a mixture of fine dust particles which have a very less terminal velocity and settling time. Although a 5 mm sieve was used in the pulverizer, due to the rotational speed of blade it could make a very fine mixture. It is difficult to find the terminal velocity of powdered manure because of its fineness, lack of facilities and its unhygienic nature. A laboratory model of blower was developed and tested.

**Table 6.** Effect of drift on pulverization.

Type of manure	Input weight (g)	Output weight (g)
Cow dung	500	485.2
Goat faecal pellets	500	472.4
Neem cake	500	477.7

## CONCLUSION

In this study, the effect of manure properties on the development of a manure pulverizer cum applicator unit were studied. Physical properties of the manure effected the manure discharge rate through the blower. Bulk density of manure was found to be 195, 492 and 520 kg m<sup>-3</sup> for cow dung, goat faecal pellets and neem cake respectively. Denser manure gets deposited at the corners and on the other hand less dense manure creates drift due to atmospheric wind. Increase in the moisture content of stored manure due to climatic changes results in unsatisfactory pulverization and application. Hence sun dried manure was preferred for clump free pulverization which helps in easy suction and application. Tapped density of manure was found to be 308, 668 and 748 kg m<sup>-3</sup> for cow dung, goat faecal pellet and neem cake respectively. Angle of repose was found to be 43±0.1 deg for cow dung, 37±0.1 deg for goat faecal pellets and 38±0.1 deg for neem cake. Optimum angle of repose of the pulverized manure helped in easy flow ability, suction and conveying of manure. Increase in the pulverizer speed increased the degree of pulverization which helps in easy decomposition of manure in the soil but at the same time it results in drift due to very fine nature.

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