

# The Waterland Management Guide on How to Make Straw Sausages

## What you need:

- A Christmas Tree wrapping machine (modified)
- Green vegetable sack netting tube
- Cable Ties
- Floats
- A ramrod
- Gloves and dust mask
- Overalls
- Two friends

**Step 1:** Choose barley straw, not wheat straw. Use either small or large bales. One big bale weighs about the same as 8 - 10 small bales. A small bale makes between 6 and 8 m of sausage. A large bale makes between 60 and 80 m of sausage. Small bales can be packed much looser than large bales.

**Step 2:** Set up the Christmas tree wrapping machine with a loading tray. This helps to load the tube without straw getting all over the place. Make sure it is firmly anchored to the ground.

**Step 3:** Set up the netting roll and load it onto the machine. Wrap an elastic strap around the neck of the wrapping machine to keep the netting on the tube. The tension in this governs how tightly packed the sausages are. It needs to be loose enough to allow the netting to come off the end, but tight enough to form a firmly packed sausage. Tie a knot in the end.



**Step 4:** Put lids on the bottle floats and load one float in before adding any straw. Add floats every metre of straw sausage for good floatation (this will help you get them out when the straw has rotted away).



**Step 5:** Break up the straw before putting it onto the loading tray. If the straw is tight then breaking it up on the ground works better. If it is loose anyway then you can just shake it onto the tray. You should use about three biscuits of a small bale or one of a large bale at a time. This usually makes about a metre of sausage. Put a float every metre. There should be three floats to each 2 m long link.



**Step 6:** Take the ramrod and push the straw through the tube and into the netting. One person breaks up the straw and loads it onto the tray. One person pushes it through the machine and the third person guides the sausage out at the end.



**Step 7:** Put cable ties around the netting every 2 metres to make chipolatas. This keeps the floats in the right section of tube and keeps the straw off the bottom of the lake. Make each sausage either 4 or 5 links long, depending on how strong you are feeling. This produces 8 - 10 m long sausages. There should be **three** floats to each link. This makes sausages that are easily handled and easily removed after 6 months or a year.



**Step 7:** Cut off the netting at the end of the sausage and tie a knot in the end. Tie about 1.5 m of rope or baler twine around each end.



**Step 7:** For lakes and open water: Set up the anchor points. Anchor points can be either 2 or 3 sausage lengths apart. They are usually made of concrete blocks with ropes attached and a bottle float at the end of the rope to mark the position. It is easier if you set out one anchor point, tie a straw sausage to the anchor point, stretch it out in the right direction and tie another one to the end and another one to the end of that one. Tie the end of the third to the anchor point and stretch it out. Drop the anchor. This gives you a good idea of how far apart to set the other anchor points.

If you are tying them to the bank then ignore the anchor point issue, except if you need to anchor the other end away from the bank. You can leave one end loose to move with the wind. This helps to distribute the active ingredients, to keep the straw well oxygenated and free from sediment and debris.



**Step 8:** Float the sausages on the water and tie them to the anchor points.

**Step 9:** Sit back and watch the algae disappear.

**Step 10:** Remove the sausages after 6 or 12 months. 12 months is usually better as most of the straw has gone by then.