MN BOARD of ANIMAL HEALTH

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Dead Animal Disposal

- Disposal Options
  - Advantages
  - Disadvantages
  - Public Relations
- Laws and Rules

Carcass Disposal Options

- Composting
- Rendering
- Burial
- Incineration
- Other Alternative Methods

General Legalities

- Wild Animals and Pets – Exempt
- Carcass must be disposed of as soon as reasonably possible
- Leaving for nature "to take care of" is not legal
- Vehicles hauling carcasses
  - Leak-proof and Covered
  - Inspected and permitted, except if owner is hauling own dead animal

NOT LEGAL DISPOSAL

Carcass Disposal Options

- **Composting**
- Rendering
- Burial
- Incineration
- Other Alternative Methods

Options –

Composting

- Recommended method of disposal for most farms
- Carcasses placed in with layers of a carbon source and a nitrogen source to allow the natural heating process to break them down

Options –

Composting

- Allowed for swine, sheep, goats, poultry
- Allowed by permit for cattle, horses, exotic animals
- Have the same person doing the composting, because it is an “art” that must be practiced

Options –

Composting

- Advantages
  - Bio-security
  - Environmentally sound
  - Heat kills most pathogens and insect larvae
  - On-site
  - Year round
  - Value added product
  - Inexpensive

Options –

Composting

- Disadvantages
  - Requires – impervious pad, rot resistant walls, and roof
  - Requires – sources of carbon, nitrogen, water
  - May be more labor intensive
  - Takes practice to develop the “art”

Options –

Composting

- Rules
  - Process mortality daily
  - Keep carcasses 6 -12 inches from sides
  - Keep pile covered
  - Take and record temperature daily
  - Must reach 130 degrees Fahrenheit
  - Minimum of 2 heat cycles
  - Finished compost – no visible soft tissue
  - Written protocol must be on hand

Options –

Composting

- Public relations
  - Site selection – consider
    - prevailing wind
    - public view
  - Give neighbors some of the compost for their gardens

Options –

Composting

Carcass Disposal Options

- Composting
- **Rendering**
- Burial
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Options –

Rendering

- Advantages
  - Recyclable resource
  - Year round
  - Most pathogens killed during processing
  - Easy

Options –

Rendering

- Disadvantages
  - Lack of Bio-security during pick up
  - Cost
    - $20 - $50 per animal
    - $350 - $650 per year
  - Not available in all areas
  - Not available for all species
  - Public relations – carcasses until picked up

Options –

Rendering

- Rules
  - Off-site pick up points
    - Animal proof enclosure
    - 200 yards from neighbor's buildings
    - Carcasses must be picked up within 72 hours
    - If refrigerated to less than 45 degrees Fahrenheit, within 7 days
  - Not allowed for animals that died from toxic materials, anthrax, rabies, or causes that could endanger other animals

Options –

Rendering

- Public relations
  - Don't leave carcasses in public view
  - Don't leave carcasses in public smell
  - Don't leave carcasses where other animals can drag them off

Carcass Disposal Options

- Composting
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- **Burial**
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Options –

Burial

- Site selection is very important, because of potential ground water pollution
- Suitable for small amounts of material, but composting may be easier

Options –

Burial

- Advantages
  - Inexpensive, if own equipment
  - Bio-security

Options –

Burial

- Disadvantages
  - Winter
  - Potential ground water pollution
  - Must stay 5 feet above seasonal high water level
  - Karst or sandy areas
  - Areas prone to flooding

Options –

Burial

- Rules
  - PCA and DNR
    - Water pollution
    - 5 feet above high water level
    - Not near lakes, rivers, streams, ditches, etc.
  - BAH
    - Cover with dirt each day

Options –

Burial

- Public relations
  - Smelly burial pits that are not covered
  - Neighbor's dog digging up carcasses and dragging them home
  - Site too close to neighbor's well

THIS IS REAL

Carcass Disposal Options

- Composting
- Rendering
- Burial
- **Incineration**
- Other Alternative Methods

Options –

Incineration

- Advantages
  - Year round use
  - Bio-security
  - Good for small sized carcasses
  - Kills pathogens

Options –

Incineration

- Disadvantages
  - Cost of Incinerator
  - Cost of fuel
  - Odor
  - Very expensive for larger carcasses

Options –

Incineration

- Rules
  - PCA
    - Must be an approved type of incinerator
    - Properly maintain unit
    - Incinerate mortality daily

Options –

Incineration

- Public relations
  - Odor interfering with neighbor's outdoor activities
    - Consider wind direction
    - Consider day of the week
    - Consider time of day

Carcass Disposal Options

- Composting
- Rendering
- Burial
- Incineration
- **Other Alternative Methods**

Options –

Alternative Methods

- Pet food processing
  - Requires permit
  - Requires inspection of each carcass
  - Facility and equipment must be clean and pass inspection

Options –

Alternative Methods

- Fur farm consumption
  - Requires permit
  - Only feeding to fur-bearing animals that do not re-enter the food chain
  - Sanitary conditions

SANITARY CONDITIONS ?

Options –

Alternative Methods

- Digester
  - Allowed at the U/MN Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory

Options –

Alternative Methods

- Emergency, commercial or experimental composting requires a permit from the Board of Animal Health
- Example
  - Power outage – barn full of dead turkeys

Conclusion

- Mortalities
  - Are a Reality
  - Disposal is a cost of doing business
- Consider what is best
  - Environment
  - Image of animal agriculture
  - Image and health of you and your farm

- QUESTIONS ??