



Safe and Legal Disposal of Animal Carcasses

The following information is for livestock managers who need to dispose of normal numbers of animal mortalities as well as for managers who wish to plan ahead for unexpected circumstances.

METHODS THAT ARE APPROPRIATE ONLY FOR INDIVIDUAL OR SMALL NUMBERS OF MORTALITIES

Burial of a carcass or a small number of carcasses. You may bury carcasses on your farm if the bottom of the hole is dry and the carcass is covered with hydrated lime. Carcasses should be buried at least 500 feet from surface waters or wells and have at least four feet of soil mounded on top to allow for settling as the carcass decomposes.

METHODS THAT ARE APPROPRIATE FOR BOTH INDIVIDUAL AND LARGER NUMBERS OF MORTALITIES

Composting. Composting dead animals and byproducts allows you to recycle the nutrients in the carcasses and is a sound environmental practice. You must have a composting plan on file with ODA, and be implementing that plan. You may also need a DEQ permit.

Landfill. Certain landfills are allowed to take carcasses as well as butchering waste. Call your local landfill to find out if they can accept animal carcasses. If the landfill does not, DEQ may grant an exception.

Incineration. Animal mortalities and byproducts can be incinerated in a DEQ-approved incinerator or cremation unit. However, this option is expensive and not widely available.

Open Burning. Animal carcasses and byproducts cannot be open burned.

Catastrophic Animal Mortality Management Plan. Burial of large numbers of carcasses, due to flood, pandemic or other reasons, requires a Catastrophic Animal Mortality Management Plan submitted to DEQ and ODA for review and approval. A DEQ permit may be necessary. Contact DEQ to discuss.

Mortality Management for Operations with CAFO Permits. Permitted CAFOs need to follow their ODA-approved Animal Waste Management Plan (AWMP) on mortality management specific to their facility. If they are unable to follow the AWMP, they would need to contact their inspector to work on modifying the AWMP to include additional methods for mortality



management / disposal. In most cases we should be able to modify the mortality management section of an AWMP with an amendment and create those with a phone conversation with the permittee. DEQ permits landfills and several of the landfills do take mortalities but have daily limits set by DEQ.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

ODA is keeping a list of landfills that accept dead livestock. Please see the "notes" column on the right-hand side of that list for any special instructions, such as calling in advance.

When hauling dead livestock to the landfill, Oregon law requires that they be covered.

ORS 601.100(3) Whole bodies of dead animals, the condition of which has not become obnoxious to human senses, and which cannot be placed in an ordinary wagon, truck bed or tank as described in subsection (1) of this section, may be transported in an open wagon or truck. In such case the body shall be suitably covered and concealed.

If you are unable to haul animals yourself or prefer to use a hauling service, please see the list of haulers licensed in Oregon.

If you have experienced large numbers of mortalities and are unable to make disposal arrangements with your local landfill or hauling service, please contact the Oregon Department of Agriculture main phone number at (503) 986-4550.