

Good morning Board members and staff.

This morning I was asked to speak to you in regards to the Division of Animal Health's authorities related to routine mortality events on livestock premises. I was also provided with the list of member's questions, and I have attempted to answer those questions that apply to DAHs authorities related to routine mortality events.

Handling of Routing Mortalities:

The Division of Animal Health regulations require the following in regards to handling of animal carcasses:

WI State Statute s. 95.50(3):

No person who owns or controls a carcass, or who owns or controls the land on which a carcass is located, may leave the carcass exposed to access by dogs or wild animals for more than 24 hours during the months of April to November or for more than 48 hours during the months of December to March if the person knows or reasonably should know that the carcass is exposed.

This authority is primarily exercised on a complaint basis as the Division does not inspect a majority of livestock premises in this State.

Complaints:

The DATCP website provides for filing complaints with the department: [DATCP Home File a Complaint \(wi.gov\)](#). We often also receive calls that are processed thru our complaint process to be routed to the correct person for entry and review for jurisdiction.

Complaints regarding disposal of carcasses are not common, over the last 5 years we have average 5 -6 complaints on carcass disposal/year.

We handle these complaints in two ways –

1. If the complaint is on an entity licensed with the Division/Agency a field staff member will respond to assess the situation and take action as appropriate.
2. If the complaint is on an unlicensed entity, we evaluate the circumstance and may refer to the Sherriff's department.

In the event the complaint involves significant amount of animals, where a disease maybe suspected, we will investigate but also inform the Sherriff's department. We refer to the Sheriff department, as they often have more direct authority to achieve quick results: under §59.54(21)

(21) County disposition of dead animals. The board may remove any dead animal, for burial or disposition at public expense, found upon public or private property within the county, or may contract for such removal and burial or other disposition with any private

rendering plant, but the cost of such removal or disposition may be recovered by the county from the owner of the carcass, if the owner is known. The board may delegate powers and duties under this subsection to any political subdivision

As a normal course of business DATCP does not have authority, or funding to remove and dispose of animal carcasses, nor do we have authority to issue citations. This means that failure to comply would require DATCP to file a complaint with the county District Attorney. The authority under s. 59.54(21) allows for the more expedient remedy.

Routine Mortality Management

DATCP does not receive, track or collect information on routine livestock mortalities. Mortality rates vary based on facility, production class, shipment stress, and other factors.

DATCP does not regulate any specific type of disposal for routine mortality, nor are we aware of what county requirements there are for composting or disposal of routine mortalities. Disposal methods will also vary based on facility and type of animal, environmental factors and cost. Similarly DATCP does not receive, track or collect information on disposal methods for routine livestock mortalities.

Disposing of livestock carcasses is an important part of animal agriculture. There are several acceptable methods of disposal that break down the carcass and limit potential spread of disease. Rendering, burial, burning and landfilling have been the typical means of disposal, but these are becoming less and less practical and composting has grown as a viable method of disposal for many producers. Each have their pros and cons and what method a livestock owner opts to utilize for disposal is dependent on multiple variables including regulatory restrictions and cost

DATCP recognizes the difficulty in disposing of carcasses in an affordable and responsible manner, and on our website, by simply searching carcass disposal, you will find links to resources on composting of animals and how to do it right.

Animals going to renderers are picked up by the renderer/dead animal collector. [Wisconsin Legislature: Chapter ATCP 57](#), administered by the Division of Food and Recreation Safety, provides the administrative rules governing dead animal collectors, renderers, and animal food processors.

Testing

DAH does not require testing of routine mortalities with two notable exceptions:

- Farm-raised deer keepers – all farm-raised deer that die, or are killed, must be sampled and submitted for CWD testing.
- Sheep and Goat farmers participating in the USDA scrapie certification program, to be on the program sheep and goats that die must be sampled and submitted for scrapie testing.

USDA APHIS Veterinary Services and State Animal Health Officials conduct surveillance for animal diseases with a high impact on animal and/or public health, including highly pathogenic avian influenza, Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy, bovine tuberculosis, brucellosis and others. This surveillance can take a variety of forms, from surveillance of animals presented for slaughter, to testing of live animals pre-movement. Livestock producers and veterinarians are required to report these diseases to state and federal animal health officials, allowing for rapid detection and response to infectious agents of concern for animal and human health.

Dr. Konkle was not aware of any studies regarding types of infectious agents recovered from livestock carcasses, so she is unable to predict which infectious agents are more or less likely to be present on an individual farm. A variety of infectious agents could be present in animal carcasses, which is the reason for utilizing a variety of effective disposal methods for livestock.

Proper disposal of animal mortalities, whether routine or as a result of an animal disease or natural disaster, prevents spread of infectious disease and protects animal, human and environmental health.

DATCP does have resources available on our website for carcass disposal: [DATCP Home Livestock Carcass Disposal \(wi.gov\)](#)

Livestock Premises Registration/inspection

The question was posed if the State is notified of a new livestock producer whether for private use or commercial, large or small;

Under s. 95.51, WI Statutes, all premises with livestock are required to register their premises the Department. They disclose species of livestock on site, not numbers of said species. This information is confidential and can only be released if necessary to prevent or control disease or to protect public health, safety or welfare.

We would also receive notification if they were required to license or register with the Department or if they register with us for a certification program.

DAH licenses/registers (Livestock related): Farm-raised Deer Keepers, Fish Farms, Animal Dealers, Animal Markets, and Animal Truckers

DAH does not inspect all farm premises in Wisconsin. DAH would only inspect their premises as part of a license requirement or we may be on site as part of an investigation into an alleged violation of regulations under our authority. The Department only has authority to review/inspect locations pertinent to those authorities.

That concludes my presentation today on DATCP, focus Animal Health, regulations regarding the disposal of routine livestock mortalities.

List of Resources:

DATCP Website, has links to information on Composting:

https://datcp.wi.gov/Pages/Programs_Services/CarcassDisposal.aspx

The USDA's National Animal Health Monitoring System may have data relevant to routine mortality rates and disposal practices for the various species. NAHMS participation is voluntary, but the information gathered per species/ sector every few years is useful. [USDA APHIS | National Animal Health Monitoring System](#)

EPA's site has useful information on Carcass management and disposal:

[Agriculture and Carcass Disposal | US EPA \(https://www.epa.gov/agriculture/agriculture-and-carcass-disposal\)](https://www.epa.gov/agriculture/agriculture-and-carcass-disposal)

[Managing Livestock and Poultry Mortalities – Livestock and Poultry Environmental Learning Community \(lpeic.org\)](http://lpeic.org)

Jefferson County Solid Waste Committee Meeting May 10, 2023



Disposal Options for Routine Mortality

- Landfill
 - Dependent of landfill accepting
- Rendering
 - Number of renders are decreasing in the state
 - Still the most popular
- Composting
 - Done onsite
 - Managed by the farm
- Incineration
 - Only two licensed facilities in WI
- Alkaline Digestion
 - Costly
 - Limited availability
- Onsite Burial
 - Environmental harm

On Farm Composting Exemption

- NR. 502.12(5), Wis. Adm. Code, limited exemption for on site farm animal composting of animal carcasses other than deer and elk are exempt from the requirements in s. NR 502.04(2) to (6), locational criteria, plan of operation submittal, licensing and all other requirements of this section, provided they are in compliance with s. 95.50(1), Stats., and all of the following:

On Farm Composting Exemption

- (a) The performance standards in s. NR 502.04(1)
- (b) The minimum operational and design standards in subs. (10) and (11), excluding the size reduction requirements in 10(c)
- (c) Only animal carcasses, farm animal manure, farm crop residue, yard residuals, and clean chipped wood are composted at the facility.
- (d) All the farm wastes composted are generated from agricultural operations either under common ownership, common management or located adjacent to each other and the composting occurs on the property of one of these agricultural operations.
- (e) The compost is utilized for agricultural landspreading at the same farm or at another farm in accordance with s. NR 518.04 except that compost made using ruminant animal carcasses may not be used at another farm.

CAFO Mortality Management

NR 243.13(8), Wis. Adm. Code – Animal carcasses may not...

- 1) Result in a discharge of pollutants to surface waters
- 2) Violate groundwater quality standards
- 3) Impair wetland functional value
- 4) Be disposed of within waste storage facilities (unless designed for this purpose)

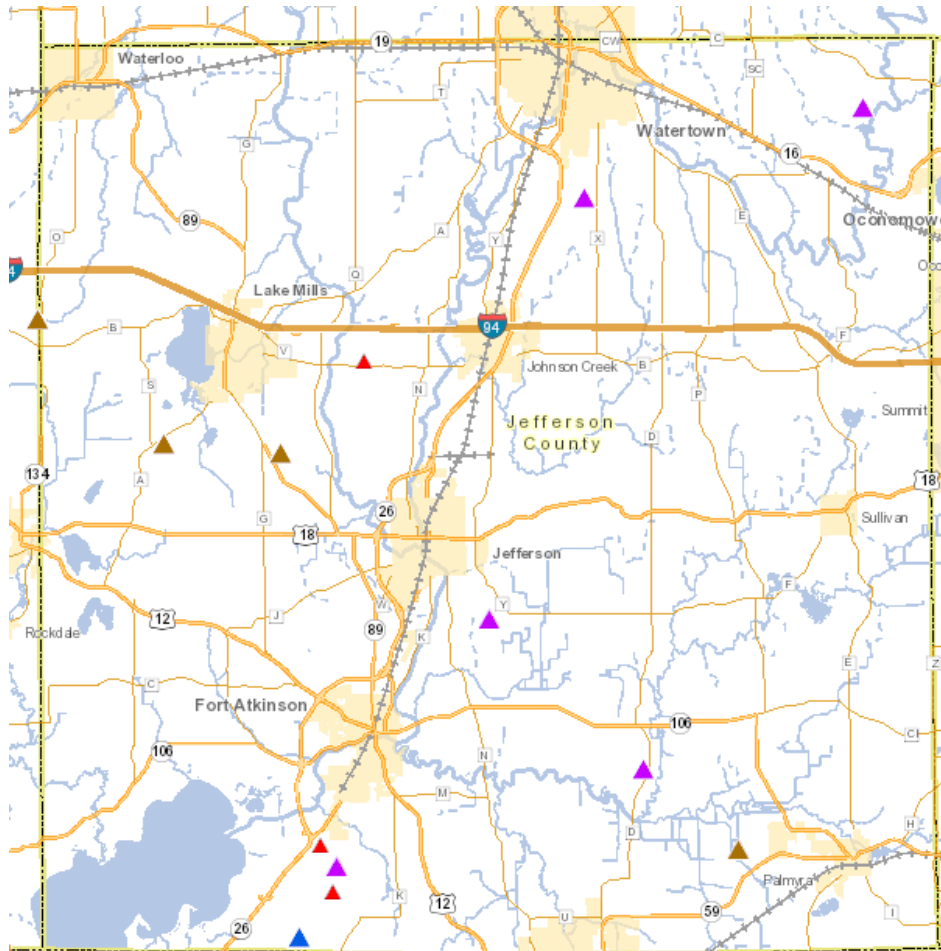
CAFO Mortality Management

Commonly utilized methods for disposal of carcasses at CAFOs include..

- 1) Rendering service
- 2) Landfill
- 3) Composting
- 4) Incineration

Jefferson County CAFOs

- Purple = Dairy
- Brown = Poultry
- Blue = Beef
- Red = Satellite



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