

A Review of Catastrophic Mortality Disposal Options

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There is a big difference between losing a whole barn full of pigs in one day and losing a few pigs at a time when it comes to considering mortality disposal options. Producers who have a Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan (CNMP) are required to plan for catastrophic losses and document their plan. It's not much fun to think about, but all producers should have a plan. It is important that careful planning be done when considering your options for catastrophic mortality disposal. Due to the large mass of material to be disposed, and the resulting bio-security and environmental concerns, your options are much more limited than for routine disposal of daily mortalities. I encourage everyone to plan ahead and investigate the options available to their operation. To assist you I have developed a comprehensive review of mortality disposal options. In some cases producers might select a combination of disposal options to deal with catastrophic losses. Review the options and then develop a flow chart of options that will work for your operation. The goal of a catastrophic mortality disposal plan should be that it is environmentally sound, economically feasible, and can be implemented in a timely fashion. Please keep in mind that Ohio Department of Agriculture Division of Animal Industry should be contacted (Phone: 614-728-6220) in the event of a disease causing catastrophic mortality.

Composting – To legally compost swine mortality in Ohio each operator must attend a mortality composting training session conducted by The Ohio State University Extension. Contact Dr. Steve Moeller, State Swine Extension Specialist at The Ohio State University if you need mortality composting training and certification, phone: 614-688-3686.

To compost large numbers of swine mortality operators need to calculate the amount of carbon amendment (sawdust) needed and the space required to compost in order to determine if composting is a feasible option. These calculations can be completed using the formula on page 25 of the Mortality Composting Manual which is: Cubic yards of sawdust = Total pounds of mortality x 0.0069 = cubic yards of sawdust needed. Example: 1000 pigs weighing 150 pounds = 150,000 pounds of mortality x 0.0069 = 1035 cubic yards of sawdust. A 40 ft. semi trailer 9 ft. wide filled 8 ft. high will hold 107 cubic yards. In areas of the state where sawdust is prevalent a windrow system could be used. Here are several contacts that are large suppliers of sawdust and sawdust with horse manure in northwest Ohio.

- Siefker Sawmill, Delphos, OH, Phone: 419-339-1956
- Wagner Sawmill, New Bavaria, OH, Phone: 419-653-4126
- University of Findlay Horse Farm, Contact Dan Webb, Phone 419-434-4525 (producing 200 cubic yards of sawdust/horse manure per week)

Rendering – Might be an option, but you should make a few phone calls to determine if it is still available and what the cost will be. Also determine if the renderer can transport the carcasses in leak proof and covered vehicles. If you are considering rendering as an option, I strongly encourage you to contact the Ohio Department of Agriculture Division of Animal Industry and obtain a list of registered haulers and renderers. (Phone: 614-728-6220)

Renderers in Ohio that are members of the National Renderers Association Inc. are:

- G.A. Wintzer, Wapakoneta call: 800-331-1801
- Holmes By Products, Millersburg call: 330-893-2322
- Sanamax, Frank Rd, Columbus (formerly Anamax) call: 614-444-1127

Renderers in Indiana that are members of the National Renderers Association, Inc. are:

- Darling International, Indianapolis call: 317-784-4486
- Kendallville Fertilizer Company, call: 260-347-1250
- Standard Fertilizer Company, Greensburg, IN call: 812-663-8391

Dead Stock Removal

- Dead stock removal – G&G Stock Removal, Bluffton, IN 800-284-6092 or 260-565-3352 or 260-353-3352

Valley Proteins, Pennsylvania and West Virginia

<http://www.valleyproteins.com/deadanimalremoval.asp>

National Renderers Association, Inc and member directory: <http://www.renderers.org/>

Burial – If onsite burial is used for large numbers of mortality, the law requires 4 feet of cover and there be no risk of groundwater pollution. Therefore, a pre-approved site and soil evaluation should be completed by the Soil and Water Conservation District in your area to ensure that the soils and water table are suitable. Please be aware that the location of a burial site may complicate future expansion of the facilities. Identify someone to complete the burial work that has equipment suitable to do the job in a timely fashion. Record all phone numbers and contact information. In the event of a catastrophic loss, the Ohio Department of Agriculture Division of Animal Industry (Phone: 614-728-6220) should be contacted and the burial reported. Catastrophic mortality loss from disease should be reported to ODA Division of Animal Industry and may require some consultation before burial.

Landfill – Because a landfill site is in existence prior to a time of emergency, contact time should be minimal. However, some time may be required to agree on terms for using the site if you have not made arrangements in advance. Be sure to seek prior approval with local landfills to see if they will take large numbers of pigs and what the charge will be. Equipment needed to load the pigs and trucks, preferably leak proof, should be identified that are suitable for hauling mortality to the landfill. The Ohio Department of Agriculture Division of Animal Industry can be contacted to obtain a list of licensed haulers. (Phone: 614-728-6220)

Incineration – Incineration is legal in Ohio at the present time, but can be very costly depending on the fuel source. Most incinerators on farms that are used for occasional mortalities will not have the capacity to incinerate large numbers of mortality. To determine if incineration is a feasible option, visit the Ohio EPA website on open burning standards at: <http://www.epa.state.oh.us/dapc/regs/3745-19/3745-19-04.pdf>

Carcass Disposal: A Comprehensive Review

A report prepared by the National Agricultural Biosecurity Center Consortium Carcass Disposal Working Group for the USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service. Consortium partners include Purdue University, Kansas State University, and Texas A&M. This report evaluates all the common disposal methods just discussed, but in more depth, plus it contains a section on novel and new technologies. If you would like more information on any disposal method please reference this comprehensive review at:

<http://fss.k-state.edu/FeaturedContent/CarcassDisposal/CarcassDisposal.htm>

In conclusion:

After reviewing your options create a decision tree for your operation and be sure you have at least a primary and secondary method for catastrophic mortality disposal. Remember that the goal of a catastrophic mortality disposal plan is to be environmentally sound, economically feasible and implemented in a timely fashion. Review your options annually to be sure they are still viable options.

