

Guidelines for Disposal of Animal Carcasses

1. Guidelines for Burial

- 1.1. Burial shall be performed in the most remote area possible.
- 1.2. Burial areas shall be located a minimum of 300 feet down gradient from wells, springs and other water sources.
- 1.3. Burial shall not be made within 300 feet of streams or ponds, or in soils identified in the country soil survey as being frequently flooded.
- 1.4. The bottom of the pit or trench should be minimum 4 to 6 feet above the water table.
- 1.5. Pits or trenches shall approximately be 4 to 6 feet deep. They should have stable slopes not steeper than 1 foot vertical to 1 foot horizontal.
- 1.6. Animal Carcasses shall be uniformly placed in the pit or trench so that they do not exceed a maximum thickness of 2 feet. The cover over and surrounding shall be a minimum of 3 feet. The cover shall be shaped so as to drain the runoff away from the pit or trench.
- 1.7. The bottom of trenches left open shall be sloped to drain and shall have an outlet. All surface runoff shall be diverted from entering the trench.
- 1.8. Burial areas shall be inspected regularly and any subsidence or cavities filled.

2. Guidelines for Composting

- 2.1 Select site that is well drained, at least 300 feet from water sources, sinkholes, seasonal seeps or other landscape features that indicate hydrological sensitivity in the area.
- 2.2 Lay 24-inch bed of bulky, absorbent organic material containing sizeable pieces 4 to 6 inches long. Wood chips or hay straw work well. Ensure the base is large enough to allow for 2-foot clearance around the carcass.
- 2.3 Lay animal in the centre of the bed. Lance the rumen to avoid bloating and possible explosion. Explosive release of gases can result in odour problems and it will blow the cover material off the composting carcass.
- 2.4 When disposing large amounts of blood or body fluid, make sure there is plenty of material to absorb the liquid. Make a depression so blood can be absorbed and then cover, if a blood spill occurs, scrape it up and put back in pile.
- 2.5 Cover carcass with dry, high-carbon material, old silage, sawdust or dry stall bedding (some semi-solid manure will expedite the process). Make sure all residuals are well covered to keep odours down, generate heat or keep vermin or other unwanted animals out of the window.
- 2.6 Let it sit for 4 to 6 months, then check to see if carcass is fully degraded.
- 2.7 Reuse the composted material for carcass compost pile, or remove large bones and land apply.
- 2.8 Site cleanliness is the most important aspect of composting; it deters scavengers, and helps control odours and keeps good neighborly relations.

Note: Animals that show signs of a neurological disease, animals that die under quarantine and those with anthrax should not be composted.

Reference: USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service, Arkansas Livestock and Poultry Commission, University of Arkansas.

Flow Chart for Disposal of Animal Carcasses at District Level

- a. Activate the DM Plan.
- b. Nodal Officer in the Incident Response System will activate all other stakeholders associated with the disposal of Animal Carcasses.
- c. Establish an Information Centre at the site of Disaster/District HQ.
- d. Inform all other Stake-holders, both in government and Non-Governmental sector, including the elected, Panchayati Raj functionaries and the community.
- e. Activate Animal Carcass Retrieval teams for the recovery and retrieval of the injured livestock and the animal carcasses.
- f. Injured livestock will get the priority for First Aid and evacuation to hospital.
- g. Prepare a record of details of the animal carcasses retrieved.
- h. Associate owners of the livestock, or their relatives and community members for the identification of the animal carcasses.
- i. Hand over the identified animal carcasses to the owners for disposal at the selected site.
- j. All unidentified animal carcasses will be photographed preferably before transportation for disposal.
- k. Unidentified or unclaimed animal carcasses shall be transported to the designated site for disposal by District authorities as per the Disaster Plan.