



**COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA  
STATE CONSERVATION COMMISSION**

DATE: April 16, 2020

TO: Commercial Manure Hauler and Brokers  
Certified Nutrient Management Planners and Reviewers

THROUGH: Karl G. Brown, Executive Secretary  
State Conservation Commission

FROM: Frank X. Schneider, Director  
Nutrient and Odor Management Programs

Johan E. Berger, Director  
Financial Administration, Policy, Certification & Conservation  
District Programs

RE: Dead Animal Disposal Information

With supply chain interruptions and market changes due to COVID-19, Pennsylvania is starting to see cases of meat and poultry processors not running at full capacity, suspending operations for defined timeframes, and ceasing operations. There are also other “end users” that may not be receiving cull animals. With all of these scenarios, some farming operations are being asked to retain and euthanize market or cull animals on the farm.

As a reminder, legal mortality disposal methods for Pennsylvania include rendering, burial, incineration, and composting, with composting being a preferred disposal method.

The purpose of this letter is to remind and provide general information to Commercial Manure Hauler and Brokers and Certified Nutrient Management Planners and Reviewers on the proper methods for dead animal disposal.

Please note that the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Animal Health is the lead on mortality disposal in Pennsylvania. All livestock and poultry operations must abide by the **PA Domestic Animal Act**'s mortality disposal requirement. More information can be found on the webpage at <https://www.agriculture.pa.gov/Animals/AHDServices/Pages/Livestock-and-Poultry-Mortality-Disposal.aspx>.

For catastrophic mortalities (whole herd/flock, etc.), please call the PDA Bureau of Animal Health and Diagnostic Services for more information and instructions at 717-772-2852.

Once mortality compost is ready to be used as a fertilizer product, it is considered a nutrient and must be applied according to recommendations in a Nutrient Management Plan (NMP) or Manure Management Plan (MMP). Depending on the amount of mortality compost and if the operation already had planned for mortality compost, an NMP or MMP update or amendment may be needed.

### **Resources Available:**

#### Videos:

Proper Animal Disposal Video, Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture:

<https://www.agriculture.pa.gov/Animals/AHDServices/Pages/Livestock-and-Poultry-Mortality-Disposal.aspx>

Proper Mortality Disposal for Pennsylvania:

<https://extension.psu.edu/proper-animal-mortality-disposal>

#### Pamphlet:

Mortality Disposal in Pennsylvania:

[http://paagombudsman.com/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/Livestock-Poultry-Mortality-Disposal\\_updatedFeb2016.pdf](http://paagombudsman.com/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/Livestock-Poultry-Mortality-Disposal_updatedFeb2016.pdf)

#### Webinar:

Comprehensive Composting Webinar

[https://psu.mediaspace.kaltura.com/media/Dairy+Management+Monday+Webinar+12.16.2019/1\\_1fg9g9wl](https://psu.mediaspace.kaltura.com/media/Dairy+Management+Monday+Webinar+12.16.2019/1_1fg9g9wl)

#### Factsheet:

USDA Livestock Mortality Composting Protocol:

[https://www.aphis.usda.gov/animal\\_health/emergency\\_management/downloads/nahems\\_guidelines/livestock-mortality-compost-sop.pdf](https://www.aphis.usda.gov/animal_health/emergency_management/downloads/nahems_guidelines/livestock-mortality-compost-sop.pdf)

Cornell Natural Rendering: Composting Livestock Mortality and Butcher Waste

<https://datcp.wi.gov/Documents/cornellcompostguide.pdf>

#### Newsletters:

Guide to Carcass Composting:

<https://www.farmingmagazine.com/livestock/carcass-composting-guide/>

On-Farm Mortality Composting: Management Principles and Information Resources

<https://extension.psu.edu/on-farm-mortality-composting-management-principles-and-information-resources>