

Emergency Disposal of On-Farm Deadstock

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Factsheet

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When disposing of any dead farm animal (deadstock), the farm operator must comply with Ontario Regulation 106/09, of the *Nutrient Management Act*, 2002. Options for the disposal of on-farm deadstock include:

- burial
- composting
- use of disposal vessels
- incineration
- anaerobic digestion
- pick up by a collector licensed under the *Food Safety and Quality Act* (FSQA)
- transport to a common bin
- transport to a waste disposal site approved under the *Environmental Protection Act* (EPA), such as a landfill
- transport to a disposal facility licensed under the FSQA

Farmers lose livestock and poultry unexpectedly, due to fire, natural disaster, system or structural failures, or disease. In situations where farmers cannot comply with O. Reg. 106/09, due to an emergency, the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA) may authorize disposal or management of deadstock that would not normally be permitted. This Factsheet discusses the process and the factors affecting eligibility for an authorization.

For additional information on these options, see the Deadstock Disposal link in the Features section of the OMAFRA website, at www.ontario.ca/omafra.

WHAT HAPPENS IN AN EMERGENCY?

Occasionally, producers lose herds or flocks to unexpected threats, which may include:

- barn fires
- natural disasters

- system failures (i.e., ventilation)
- disease
- heat stress
- structural failure (i.e., barn collapse)

When such an event occurs, matters such as the health and welfare of the remaining animals and worker safety must first be attended to, but proper management and disposal of the deadstock are also vital.

Under the regulation, when emergency conditions exist that make it difficult to dispose of deadstock as specified in the regulation, farm operators may apply to OMAFRA for authorization for an alternate method of storage, disposal or management.

QUALIFYING FOR AN AUTHORIZATION

OMAFRA bases its decision on the following:

Urgency

- What emergency conditions exist?
- How long will they continue?
- How much deadstock is involved?
- What is their approximate age and weight?

For instance, poultry carcasses will rapidly decompose in the heat and humidity of summer. Rapid disposal is necessary.

Inability to compost

- What is the condition of the deadstock?
- Are they mixed with any other material?

Emergencies such as structural collapse (Figure 1) or barn fires may result in deadstock being mixed with debris, which prevents adequate composting. The deadstock may also be in a state that is not acceptable for collectors.



Figure 1. The destruction of a barn, due to a fire, may prevent the normal disposal of deadstock.

Transportation problems

- What storage, transport or disposal options have been considered?
- Why have they been rejected?
- What conditions exist that make it difficult to comply with the regulation?

Understand the available storage, transport or disposal options fully before rejecting them. Options may not be feasible or permitted, due to weather conditions, geography and availability of resources.

Alternate disposal method

- What method of disposal is being proposed?
- How does it vary from the standards in the regulation?
- What actions will be taken to ensure that the risk of environmental contamination is prevented or minimized from the storage, management or disposal methods being proposed? These may include monitoring of the disposal site or tile drainage, increased separation distances to sensitive receivers such as surface water and wells, etc. OMAFRA cannot grant an authorization that could result in an adverse effect to the environment.

Other details

- Are there other agencies involved in the emergency?
- Have they given any instructions for the disposal of the existing deadstock and any future mortalities that may result due to this emergency?
- Are there other circumstances or facts that OMAFRA should be aware of?

In accordance with the regulation, OMAFRA must consider many factors in addition to the information that is provided in order to decide whether to grant the emergency disposal authorization. The decision of the Ministry is final.

If OMAFRA chooses to issue an authorization, it may include whatever conditions are considered advisable to protect public interest. If granted an authorization, the farm operator must provide OMAFRA with satisfactory evidence, within 30 days of the authorization being granted, that the deadstock was disposed of in accordance with the authorization.

HOW TO APPLY

To apply for an Emergency Authorization for disposal of deadstock, contact:

- during normal business hours:
Agricultural Contact Centre, 1-877-424-1300
- during off-hours or non-business days:
Spills Action Centre, at 1-800-268-6060

OMAFRA or the Ministry of the Environment (MOE) can provide help preparing the application.

PLANNING AND COMMUNICATION

Prepare a mortality disposal plan outlining how to dispose of deadstock in a timely, environmentally safe fashion. Some of the options for managing or disposing of dead farm animals require advance preparation, such as obtaining substrate for composting. This can only be done with proper planning.

A mortality disposal plan includes:

- identifying an appropriate location for disposal, storage or collection
- evaluating economic and operational factors
- record keeping

To identify areas on the farm that are suitable for deadstock disposal, understand the soils on the farm and be able to identify surface water flow and sensitive areas on the farm. Participate in the Environmental Farm Plan Program administered by the Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association.

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**Do you know about Ontario's new Deadstock Regulations
under the *Nutrient Management Act, 2002 (NMA)*?**

This Factsheet is for informational purposes only and is not, and should not be, construed as legal advice. In the event of a conflict between this Factsheet and the NMA and/or O. Reg. 106/09, the NMA and/or O. Reg. 106/09 govern. Please review the NMA and O. Reg. 106/09 and, if you have any questions about the application or interpretation of these regulations or have other legal questions, consult a lawyer.

Also consult with the applicable federal legislation (if any) in this area to ensure that you are also in compliance with federal requirements regarding the disposal of farm animals that die on a farm.

For more information on the NMA, call the Nutrient Management Information Line at 1-866-242-4460, e-mail nman.omafra@ontario.ca or visit www.ontario.ca/omafra.

Factsheets are continually being updated so please ensure that you have the most recent version.



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