

Massachusetts Avian Flu and Other Carcass Management Planning

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MHOA 2007 Seminars



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Massachusetts All Hazards Planning

- Revising statewide plan to manage debris from all types of hazards
- Stakeholder meetings to provide recommendations and inform and support planning
- One component of the plan: *carcass management*
- **Specific Avian Flu Debris Management Plan**



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Avian Flu

- Highly pathogenic avian influenza virus – H5N1
- Poses risk to people and birds
- Virus can survive outside live host for limited time.
- Short term exposure to heat, pH extremes, or dryness can inactivate virus.
- Threat to public health and the environment, however, **no cases have been found in US.**



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Planning Team

- Planning Team:
 - Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP)
 - Department of Agricultural Resources (DAR)
 - Department of Fisheries and Wildlife (DFW)
 - Department of Public Health (DPH)
- Determine roles and responsibilities and protocol for avian flu and other carcass management
- Avian Flu plan may act as model for many types of carcass management



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If Avian Flu Suspected

Lead Agencies

- Agricultural Settings
 - USDA
 - DAR
- Wild Birds
 - US Fish and Wildlife Service
 - MassWildlife



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Scope of Draft Avian Flu Management Plan

- Primary plan for preventing, controlling, and responding to avian flu outbreaks in Massachusetts
 - farm settings and wild birds.
- Provide recommendations, planning and support for managing debris from avian flu
 - animal carcasses, litter, and associated material.
- Develop model/resources/tools for avian flu *and* other carcass management issues



Discussion Draft

- Meeting with many groups across state to solicit input on draft plan and improve preparation and planning
- Expect to revise plan based on comments and new information



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If Outbreak...

Debris Management Issue

- Avian Flu Debris Management Plan Includes:
 - General statewide planning for small farms and wild birds
 - Specific plans for largest poultry farms



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General Plan Options

- **On-farm composting – often preferred**
- On-farm burial
- On-farm burning
- Off-site - municipal waste combustion facility or landfill
- Other?



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On-Site Composting

- On-farm management preferred – bio-security
- Preferred locational and geographical criteria
- Equipment, training and composting expertise
- Pre-qualified compost consultants contract
- List of compost suppliers



On-Site Burial or Combustion

- Drinking water is primary concern
 - Maintain 4 foot separation from groundwater
- Future use of area considered
- On-site combustion
 - Creates air pollution
 - Bird carcasses don't burn well



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Other Options

- On-site or off-site disinfection/microwaving and alkaline digestion
 - Not commercially available in state
- Rendering
 - Cannot accept infected carcasses
- Off-site composting
 - Not expected to be a viable option



Off-Site Disposal

- Pre-qualify sites and haulers
 - Properly permitted
 - Willing and able to accept
- Establish de-contamination procedures for trucks leaving farm
- Establish bio-security procedures at receiving facility



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Farm Specific Planning

- DAR and MassDEP will work with the largest poultry farms in MA to develop site specific plans



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Wild Bird Debris Management

- On-site management likely not a good option
- Likely the same for backyard flocks
- Send off-site for disposal
- Handle carefully (double bag, disinfect tools, gloves)



Handling Avian Flu Questions

- DPH list of Frequently Asked Questions on Avian Flu for:
 - General Public
 - Health Care Providers

www.mass.gov/dph/cdc/epii/flu/avian_flu.htm



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Other Important Contacts

- Report sick or dead birds:
 - Farms: 1-866-536-7593
 - Wild Birds: 1-866-4-USDA or 1-866-MassWNV
- Websites:
 - MA DPH Avian Flu Web Page:
http://www.mass.gov/dph/cdc/epii/flu/avian_flu.htm
 - MA DAR Avian Flu Web Page:
http://www.mass.gov/agr/animalhealth/poultry/avian_influenza.htm
 - MA DFW Animal Disease Web Page:
http://www.mass.gov/dfwele/dfw/dfw_avian_flu_response.htm



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Next Steps

- Continue external meetings and discussions
- Pre-qualify compost consultants, providers of compost materials, haulers, and facilities to accept infected carcasses
- Work with DAR and largest poultry farms on plans
- Develop other carcass management plans (e.g., foot and mouth disease?)

