Massachusetts
Avian Flu and Other
Carcass Management Planning

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MHOA 2007 Seminars
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
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.
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
If Avian Flu Suspected

Lead Agencies

• Agricultural Settings
  – USDA
  – DAR

• Wild Birds
  – US Fish and Wildlife Service
  – MassWildlife
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
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
General Plan Options

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

• DAR and MassDEP will work with the largest poultry farms in MA to develop site specific plans
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
Other Important Contacts

• Report sick or dead birds:
  – Farms: 1-866-536-7593
  – Wild Birds: 1-866-4-USDA or 1-866-MassWNV

• Websites:
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?)