



Professional Recyclers of PA

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## **ORGANICS ROUNDTABLE**

**Tuesday, April 21, 2009**

**Adams County Ag & Natural Resources Center**

**670 Old Harrisburg Road**

**Gettysburg, PA 17325**

**<http://www.adamscounty.us/adams/cwp/view.asp?a=3&q=466042>**

**Phone: (717)-334-0636**

Those in attendance were: Dr. Robert Graves (PSU), Dr. John Roberts (PDA), George Hurd (PSU Cooperative Extension), Michelle Ferguson (DEP-North Central Regional Office), Dr. Dave Wolfgang (PSU), Walt Dinda (PA-DEP South Central Regional Office), Ashley Duncan (Barton & Loguidice), Jim Shenk (Jim Ray Farms), Laura Collum (Skelly & Loy), Bicky Redman (Adams County Environmental Services), Terry Keene (Barton & Loguidice), Harry R. Rotz, Jr. (H R Rotz Jr), Ellen Montis (Lycoming County Resource Management Services), J. Craig Williams (PSU), Mike Giuranna (EPA Region III), Karen Knoll (PSU Cooperative Extension), Jennifer Johnson (PDA-Altoona), Dr. Elizabeth Santini (PDA-Altoona), and Jan Arnold (PROP).

Bicky Redman, Adams County Solid Waste and Recycling Coordinator, welcomed everyone and invited all to introduce themselves. Afterwards, Terry Keene (Organics Committee Co-Chair) then introduced George Hurd, PSU Cooperative Extension of Franklin County who gave a PowerPoint presentation, "Livestock Mortality Management (Disposal Options and Mortality Composting Methods)." (A copy is available upon request.) Some of the points George made were

- Yearly, 6 mature animals out of 100 die on-farm.
- One of the large area renderers, Valley Protein, had notified its clients that due to new FDA regulations, it will no longer be accepting bovine animals (they will continue to accept horses and pigs). This will place a new burden on dairy and beef farmers to manage its cattle mortalities by other means.
- Because of comments made at prior presentations, coyotes are an issue when 'dumping the carcass on the back 40'. Also, when giving presentations to farmers, vectors are always mentioned.
- All animals can be composted.
- Animals exhibiting signs of neurological disease must be reported to PDA to be told of proper disposal procedure.
- Siting issues are critical when placing a mortality composting area. A 200' buffer from sinkholes, wells, and any water is necessary. Also, visual and wind buffers are recommended. An access road is vital.
- In-vessel composting is the usual method for poultry.
- Poultry and swine can also be done in free-standing composting units.
- When composting poultry, they can be placed in 6 layers.
- Free-standing bin designs are based on what type of equipment you use to turn the pile. Cost for free-standing bins can range from \$5,000 to \$20,000. NRCS has grants available to help with construction cost though a roof and a concrete pad are required.
- Fencing around the pile is recommended with static piles.

- When making the pile, straw, cornstalks, bunk waste and/or bedded pack material can be used as a base for absorption. Wood chips allow for moisture and air flow.
- If the cover layer is heavy, lancing the abdomens of the carcasses of larger animals is not necessary. If the cover is light and you don't lance, you could have "blowouts" and create craters.
- Monitoring the pile is very important. Turn the pile in 90 days or let it compost for 4 to 6 months.
- In composting, the first month the meat is cooked; the second month the meat is digested; in the third month, bones are clean. Mature compost takes 6 to 9 months.
- The bones can be: reused in the next new base layer, ground up and land applied, but if left as is on the field can puncture tires and cause complaints from neighbors.
- Bottom line: have good pile construction for good composting.

Dr. Dave Wolfgang, PSU Cooperative Extension Veterinarian, followed George with a PowerPoint presentation on the "Control of Diseases in Livestock Mortality through Composting." (A copy is available upon request.) Some of the points Dr. Wolfgang made were:

- Pathogen reduction occurs through composting (visit <http://www.deq.state.or.us/lq/pubs/docs/sw/compost/ResearchConcerningHumanPathogensExcerpts.pdf> for more information).
- Nearly all work to date indicates that viruses (like BVD, IBR, even avian influenza) all destroyed in just a few days.
- General recommendations are if the carcass is infected with viral diseases, don't touch pile for 5 days. Some recommend 7 days just to be on the safe side.
- Bacteria are greatly reduced in active piles.
- In the carcass, you have a degree of petrification vs. composting.
- In general most bacteria are killed in active compost in just a few days. In the carcass the time is much longer. If you suspect bacterial pathogens in the carcass, turning or moving is not recommended for 6-8 months minimum.
- Putting cover of manure on pile will help to start decomposition.

During lunch Terry mentioned:

- PROP's draft Strategic Plan in regards to the Organics Committee (which will be discussed in some detail at the July Roundtable),
- the PROP Conference (July 29 to 31, at the Scranton Hilton) which will feature Organics tracts that include Composting 237: Composting Business and Economics (.2CEUs), The Complicated Marketplace (which will include organics and recycling markets), Innovative Program Promotion, Compostable Product Seminar that will deal with food waste composting and compostable serviceware products, Recycling 241: Vermicomposting (3.0 CEUs and Act 48 accredited) and the closing plenary session, "Recycling 411: Communicating the Benefits of Recycling" (.2 CEUs) which will also include organics.
- PROP's Certification Classes that include Recycling 356: Recycling Economics II which is a valuable tool for anyone interested in marketing issues, and Composting 201: The Practical Science which will be held June 10 and 11 at the Union County Government Center. Topics covered include fundamentals of composting, a compost site tour, compost math, rules-regs-grants-technical assistance, site design & layout, composting equipment, compost quality, facility problems and worker safety.
- Any additional suggestions for a possible new name for PROP's Organics Newsletter, "The Rottin' News" should be submitted to Jan as soon as possible. Other names previously suggested included Organics Breakdown, Organics Review, the Carbon Chronicles, Organics Proponent, Organics Herald, Integrated Organics News, Integrated Bionews, Organics Bionews, Bionic News, and Composter News & Views.
- Organics Committee members on other PROP Committees representing Organics include Nadine Davitt (PSU)-Markets Committee, Patti Olenick (PA-DEP)-Media Committee, and Dan Snowden (PennDOT)-Education and Markets Committees. We need someone from this Committee on the Governmental Liaison and Membership Committees. Anyone interested in volunteering should contact Jan ([jarnold@proprecycles.org](mailto:jarnold@proprecycles.org)).
- All PROP information can be found on the PROP website at [www.proprecycles.org](http://www.proprecycles.org).

After lunch, Dr. John Roberts, Regional Veterinarian with PDA's Bureau of Animal Health & Diagnostic Services, provided us with information regarding "Federal and State Regulations for Mortality Disposal and Composting" with copies of "Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture Bureau of Animal Health License Requirement for Mortality Handling" – includes Dead Domestic Animal Hauler's License, Dead Domestic Animal Disposal Business License, Domestic Animal Law that contains regional contact names and phone numbers, and PDA Domestic Animal Law Contacts (available upon request), "Subchapter E – Disposal of Dead Domestic Animals and Animal Waste" which includes information regarding PDA's General authority information, disposal of dead domestic animals, disposal of animal waste, licensure requirement of dead domestic animal disposal businesses, licensing procedure, conditions of licensure, and denial, suspension or revocation of license, and "Application for Dead Domestic Animal Disposal Business License." (All are available upon request.) Some of the points Dr. Roberts made were:

- Disposal by burial is legal.
- PDA has no enforcement capabilities on humane issues but they have enforcement over state laws and will write citations.
- The Domestic Animal Act can be found by going to [www.agriculture.state.pa.us](http://www.agriculture.state.pa.us), then clicking on Legal Library, then clicking on the "D" in the alphabet and then clicking Domestic Animal Act.
- If you are going to compost animals on-farm or landfill them, you don't need to pay the fee stated in the "Application for Dead Domestic Animal Disposal Business License."
- PDA works with DEP, NRCS, and PSU Extension regarding mortality composting issues.
- PDA needs to be informed if a farm has dangerous transmissible diseases.
- The accepted methods of disposal are composting and/or digestion, rendering, direct burial, landfilling, and incineration. All must be performed within 48 hours of mortality.
- Certain landfills are able to accept mortalities. (This is a further note from Dr. Elizabeth Santini who also participated in this discussion. It will be placed on the Organics page on the PROP website and will also be included in other publications:

Landfills that receive dead domestic animals\* or domestic animal parts for disposal must obtain a **Dead Domestic Animal Disposal Business License** from the **Department of Agriculture Bureau of Animal Health**. Contact Jeanine Burnett at 717-772-2852 to obtain a Dead Domestic Animal Disposal Business License application. In addition, if the landfill/municipal refuse authority maintains its own trucks and is involved with hauling the dead animals to the landfill site then there is an additional requirement that the refuse authority be licensed as a hauler of dead domestic animals. The Hauler's License can be obtained by calling Mary Bates at 717-783-9550, ext 211. In most cases the Hauler's License will cost \$50.00 per calendar year and the Dead Domestic Animal Disposal Business License will be no fee unless the refuse authority operates some kind of processing or rendering plant. For more information, contact Dr. Tony LaBarbera, Chief of Regulations and Compliance Division, Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Animal Health 717-783-9550 or the nearest regional office listed below:

REGION 1-Meadville-Dr. Karen Martin.....814-332-6890  
REGION 2-Montoursville-Dr. Amy Nesselrodt.....570-433-2640  
REGION 3-Tunkhannock-Dr. Patricia McQuiston....570-836-2181  
REGION 4-Gibsonia-Dr. Mike Tulley.....724-443-1585  
REGION 5-Altoona-Dr. Elizabeth Santini.....814-946-7315  
REGION 6-Harrisburg-Dr. John Roberts.....717-346-3223  
REGION 7-Creamery-Dr. Aliza Simeone.....610-489-1003

\*Domestic animals include any animal raised in captivity including but not limited to: dogs, cats, cattle, horses, sheep, goats, pigs, rabbits, llamas, alpacas, poultry and captive cervids such as deer and elk.)"

Please note: I have since learned that there is only one landfill licensed in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania accepting animal mortalities: **NORTHERN TIER SOLID WASTE AUTHORITY** located in Bradford County on U S ROUTE 6, TROY, PA 16947.

Next, Craig Williams of PSU Cooperative Extension in Tioga County presented “Composting and Planning for Catastrophic Loss of Livestock” on PowerPoint. (Available upon request.) Some of Craig’s points were:

- The best thing to do with infected animals is to not truck them at all but to bring the carbon material to the site for composting if that is the approved method of disposal.
- Foam is a more recent method now used for performing mass mortality (i.e. for an infected flock) in poultry houses but NOT in multi-tier layer houses.
- Composting is the recommended alternative to rendering.
- A 250’ x 250’ pad will hold 5-15’x200’ windrows and 1 windrow can hold 100 cattle.
- Soil structure is very important in compost site placement. Visit <http://soils.usda.gov/> especially [http://soils.usda.gov/survey/printed\\_surveys/](http://soils.usda.gov/survey/printed_surveys/) for the soil survey results with a special recommendation for Pennsylvania soils at [http://soils.usda.gov/survey/printed\\_surveys/state.asp?state=Pennsylvania&abbr=PA](http://soils.usda.gov/survey/printed_surveys/state.asp?state=Pennsylvania&abbr=PA). This information is also used for farm preservation.
- There will be a compost mortality demo site at this year’s Penn State’s Ag Progress Days, August 18 – 20, at Rock Springs.
- <http://www.swinecast.com/mortality> is the website for SwineCast 0379, Pros and cons of various mortality disposal.
- <http://fazd.tamu.edu/events/emergency-management-of-mass-animal-mortality-workshop/Dr.%20Glanville%20Composting%20n%20Burial.pdf> is the website for “Composting for Emergency Disposal of Livestock Mortalities” by Dr. Tom Glenville
- <http://www.onsetcomp.com/> is the website for Hobo Data Loggers, data sensor equipment.
- [www.agmap.psu.edu](http://www.agmap.psu.edu) is the website for Ag Map that can help you locate additional carbon sources among other organic-related items of interest.

Bicky then began her program and explained how she and Karen began their demonstration site. (A copy of their PowerPoint presentation is available upon request.) Old silage was used as a base with leaves and wood chips added to the surrounding and cover areas. The pile was built on March 17 and by the time we opened the pile on April 21, most of the calf was composted. Bones and some of the calf’s hide remained.

We dispersed after viewing and discussing the demo site.

Future Organics Roundtables:

Tuesday, July 14 at Beaver County Compost Facility, [www.beavercountyrecycling.com](http://www.beavercountyrecycling.com)

Thursday, November 12 at Centre County Solid Waste Authority, Interpretive Center, [www.centrecountyrecycles.com](http://www.centrecountyrecycles.com)

Respectfully Submitted,

Jan Arnold  
PROP Program Manager