



Carcass Disposal/Biosecurity

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Overview

An important portion of any biosecurity plan is carcass disposal. Proper carcass disposal is important to prevent the spread of disease and to prevent surface and groundwater contamination.

Options for Disposal

Louisiana statute RS 3:2131 governs the disposal of animal carcasses. There are three legal ways:

1

Deep burial

- Minimum of 6 feet deep for large animals such as cows and horses
- Minimum of 4 feet deep for small animals such as sheep, goats and swine

2

Cremation

3

Other sanitary methods as approved by the U.S. Department of Agriculture

- Composting
- Rendering

The most common method for animal carcass disposal on farms and ranches in Louisiana is deep burial. When utilizing this method, site selection is important. Keep the following things in mind when selecting your burial site:

The site should be 300 feet from any water source such as a creek, pond or well.

The site must also be 300 feet away from neighboring residences, public areas or property lines.

The bottom of the hole should be at least 1 foot above any floodplain level and at least 2 feet above the seasonal high-water table.

References

Payne, J. (2017). Proper disposal of routine and catastrophic livestock and poultry mortality (ANSI-8219). Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service. <https://extension.okstate.edu/fact-sheets/proper-disposal-of-routine-and-catastrophic-livestock-and-poultry-mortality-2.html>

La. Rev. Stat. § 3:2131 (2024).

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