

POLICY NUMBER: AHNPD-01-11

DATE: July 13, 2011

SUBJECT: Processing Animal Carcasses by Composting, Incineration, and Digestion

I. Background

Indiana law requires "a person who owns or cares for an animal that has died from any cause to dispose of the animal's body not later than twenty-four (24) hours after knowledge of death so as not to produce a nuisance". Ind. Code 15-17-11-20(a). Disposal of the animal carcass must be by a method described in the Indiana Code in a manner prescribed by the Indiana State Board of Animal Health (BOAH) in administrative rules. Ind. Code 15-17-11-20. The BOAH has prescribed standards for disposing of animal carcasses and condemned and inedible waste from slaughtering facilities in [345 IAC 7-7](#).

The BOAH has prescribed standards for rendering, burying, landfill disposal, animal feeding, composting, incineration, and digesting animal carcasses and condemned and inedible waste. [345 IAC 7-7](#). The standards for composting, incineration, and digestion include the following requirements:

1. A person composting must expose the material to conditions that "will thoroughly and completely break down the material. Any part that is not completely composted must be removed from the compost prior to application." [345 IAC 7-7-3.5\(a\)\(1\)\(D\)](#).
2. A person incinerating must expose the material being processed to conditions that "result in the carcasses and waste being thoroughly and completely incinerated. If the process results in a carcass part that is not completely incinerated, the part must be disposed of" in accordance with the BOAH rules. [345 IAC 7-7-3.6\(b\)\(2\)](#).
3. A person disposing of material through biodigestion or chemical digestion must expose the material being processed to conditions that "result in the carcasses and waste being thoroughly and completely digested". [345 IAC 7-7-3.7\(a\)\(2\)\(A\)](#).

II. Purpose

The purpose of this document is to establish the BOAH's interpretation of its carcass disposal rule by clarifying application of the following terms governing a person disposing of animal carcasses or condemned or inedible waste:

1. "thoroughly and completely break down" and "completely composted" under the composting standards in [345 IAC 7-7-3.5\(a\)\(1\)\(D\)](#);
2. "thoroughly and completely incinerated" under the incineration standards in [345 IAC 7-7-3.6\(b\)\(2\)](#); and
3. "thoroughly and completely" digested under the digestion standards in [345 IAC 7-7-3.7\(a\)\(2\)\(A\)](#).

III. Policy

The BOAH considers a carcass and condemned and inedible waste to be thoroughly and completely processed (composted, incinerated, or digested) in compliance with the BOAH rules when the carcass or condemned or inedible waste has been subjected to a process prescribed in BOAH rules ([345 IAC 7-7](#)) and the resulting finished product does not contain visible pieces of soft tissue. The resulting finished product from properly operated compost piles, incinerators, and digesters may contain bones and feathers that have been processed but retain their structure.

The BOAH has adopted this interpretation of its rules because a carcass or waste that is disposed of by composting, incineration, or digestion under the BOAH rule will have gone through a process that is reasonably likely to kill pathogenic organisms. [345 IAC 7-7-3.5\(a\)\(1\)\(D\)\(i\)](#); [345 IAC 7-7-3.6\(b\)\(1\)](#); [345 IAC 7-7-3.7\(a\)\(2\)\(C\)](#). The BOAH does not think that the bones and feathers that remain after processing present a hazard to animals or people. Bones and bone fragments that remain after processing lose their structure when land applied. Larger bones, such as a full size skull or femur from adult livestock, should be removed or crushed prior to or shortly after land application because larger bones may take longer to lose their structure and may be unsightly when land applied.

IV. Contact Information

Direct all questions inquiries regarding this Policy to:

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