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ANIMAL HEALTH AND FOOD SAFETY ADVISORY

Standard Operating Guidelines for Disposition of Farmed Animals and Animal-Sourced Food Products Involved in Natural or Man-Made Disasters

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When livestock, poultry, or animal products (such as milk or eggs) intended for human consumption are involved in a disaster, such as: transportation accident, chemical spill, barn fire, building collapse, flood waters, etc. issues such as animal welfare and human health must be taken into consideration. Livestock, poultry, or animal products involved in an incident may or may not be fit for human consumption.

Remember: When assessing farmed animals or animal-sourced food products involved in an incident, the owner is responsible for the animals or products and making decisions on their disposition. Commercial livestock and poultry haulers will have a bill of lading in the truck which will have the owner's information along with number and type of animals on the trailer. Commercial livestock may be insured. The owner should make the contacts listed below as appropriate. If, however, the owner is unknown, or for some reason unable or unwilling to make the contacts, the Incident Commander (IC) or his/her delegate should make the appropriate contacts. If the owner is making the calls the IC or IC delegate should continue to communicate with the owner to assure the issues are being resolved.

Questions on the disposition of livestock, poultry, or animal-sourced food products involved in an incident should be directed to the Indiana State Board of Animal Health (BOAH) at: 317-544-2400 or toll free at: 877-747-3038. After normal business hours, callers should follow instructions for reporting emergencies so BOAH staff can return their call. BOAH does not have first response teams for disasters but can provide guidance on disposition.

Slaughter/Processing of Livestock or Poultry Involved in a Disaster or Accident

Deceased livestock and poultry cannot be processed for human consumption. Livestock must be observed alive by a state or federal inspector then slaughtered and processed under state or federal inspection for the meat to be given, sold, or donated to anyone other than the owner of the animal. The owner of an animal can have it processed for the owner's personal use; in this case the animal does not have to be processed under state or federal inspection.

Cattle must be able to walk on their own to be eligible for processing for human consumption. Other livestock species (example: swine, sheep, goats) that are non-ambulatory (unable to walk) may be slaughtered and processed at the discretion of the inspector or veterinarian at the state or federal processing plant.

Livestock involved in disasters or accidents may have recently been given medications or vaccinations. The proper withholding period for medications and vaccinations must be observed for all types of domestic animals prior to slaughter for human consumption.

Injured Animals

Mildly injured livestock or poultry should be salvaged when possible and provided treatment as necessary. The owner of the animal(s) is responsible for providing or arranging to provide transportation (if necessary, for example in trailer accidents, flooding), care, and treatment. If the owner is unable or unwilling to provide or arrange to provide transportation, care, and treatment the IC or IC delegate should make arrangements to provide transportation, and temporary care and treatment.

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BOAH recommends that severely injured animals with little to no likelihood for survival be humanely euthanized using accepted field humane euthanasia methods as outlined by the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA). A full list of options may be found at the AVMA website: www.AVMA.org. Accepted field euthanasia techniques include:

- Gunshot – appropriate caliber and placement (head preferred; heart or cervical spine—if these are the only option—followed as soon as possible by a properly placed head shot) [Refer to BOAH Animal Health Advisory: *Field Euthanasia of Livestock via Gunshot.*];
- penetrating captive bolt to the head;
- approved injected chemical euthanasia; and
- internal cervical dislocation for poultry.

Other methods are available, depending on the type of animal and situation; consult a local veterinarian or BOAH. To ensure humane euthanasia and improve safety, training for law enforcement and other responders is recommended. If possible get written permission for euthanasia from the owner; if the owner is not available consult with a local veterinarian, if a vet is not available either, document the situation as completely as possible before euthanizing animal.

Injured wild animals, including birds, can be given to a Department of Natural Resources (DNR) permitted wildlife rehabilitator or taken to a veterinarian for immediate medical care or humane euthanasia. They can't be kept by the finder. A list of permitted wildlife rehabilitators can be found on DNR's website: <http://www.in.gov/dnr/fishwild/5492.htm> or call DNR's Central Dispatch 24/7 at: 812-837-9536.

Wild deer injured and unlikely to survive can be euthanized by DNR personnel or by law enforcement. DNR may be contacted 24/7 at Central Dispatch: 812-837-9536. A permit is necessary to salvage wild deer found dead or hit by a vehicle. The permit can be issued by DNR or law enforcement. The person or entity (such as a food pantry) receiving the meat must be listed on the permit.

Dead Livestock and Poultry Disposal

Deceased livestock or poultry must be disposed of, according to BOAH rules, in one of six accepted ways:

- Pick-up by a licensed rendering company
- Burial with at least 4 feet of dirt on top of the carcass(es) and in accordance with local codes
- Complete Incineration
- Composting
- Feeding to exotic large cats with a permit from BOAH
- Chemical digestion

Please note: Exposure to certain chemicals or waste products may affect which means of disposal is more appropriate for deceased livestock or poultry. Contact BOAH at: 317-544-2400.

Waste Material

The owner of the facility and the animals is responsible for disposal. Contact the Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM) for guidance on disposal of large amounts of deceased farmed animals, animal products and/or waste material after an incident such as a barn fire/collapse/breached bulk tank or overturned tanker. IDEM's 24 hour emergency number is: 888-233-7745.

Bulk Milk Haulers

In situations involving bulk milk tank trucks, BOAH's Dairy Division must be contacted. The division may be contacted using the main BOAH phone numbers listed above. If the tanker is breached, the milk is considered contaminated and cannot be used for human consumption. The owner of the milk is responsible for proper disposal. This milk is typically sold for animal feed or put in a permitted agricultural lagoon or offloaded for land application. If the tanker is not breached, and the owner wants to salvage the milk for human consumption, the tanker may be taken to a dairy processing plant or the milk may be transferred to another tanker.

Farmed Deer and Elk

Farmed (or captive) cervids (such as deer or elk) are considered livestock in Indiana and should be handled as livestock.

Packaged Animal-Sourced Food Products

For packaged animal products (ex. meat, poultry, milk, eggs) contact your local health department for guidance.