

# DEPOPULATION AND DISPOSAL OF FOREIGN ANIMAL DISEASE (FAD) INFECTED ANIMALS

December 2022

## I. INTRODUCTION

### A. PURPOSE

This tab documents plans for depopulation and disposal of infected and exposed animals designated by the State Veterinarian (SV) during a Foreign Animal Disease (FAD) incident.

## II. SITUATION AND ASSUMPTIONS

### A. SITUATION

1. Background. A major outbreak of a FAD could have significant impacts on human and/or animal health and cripple for years the State's agribusiness industry and those other businesses that depend on it. Export and production would decrease. Businesses would fail. Tax revenue generated directly and indirectly would diminish dramatically. The State's ability to export susceptible animals would virtually end for three to five years. And, if the disease spreads to other states, it could have a devastating impact on the United States' ability to compete in the global marketplace. To contain and eradicate the disease, it may be necessary to depopulate significant numbers of infected and susceptible animals and properly dispose of their carcasses.
2. Current. After consultation with the USDA, the NC Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (NCDA&CS) through the State Veterinarian (SV) classifies a FAD incident as Highly Suspicious or Confirmed. The SV directs depopulation and disposal of animals within the quarantine area that maintain biosecurity.

### B. ASSUMPTIONS

1. Depopulation of certain susceptible animals in some FAD outbreaks may be the best solution to prevent spread and involvement of larger numbers of susceptible animals. Vaccination and other measures may not be available as tools to help stop the spread of the disease agent. In addition, if the disease is zoonotic, then depopulation of animals may be necessary to prevent human exposure.
2. In some FAD outbreaks, a managed eradication approach may be taken where infected animals are not euthanized unless the diseases process so

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affects the animal that animal welfare concerns necessitate euthanasia. Methods of depopulation must be approved by the SV.

3. Owners of designated animals will likely have limited capability to depopulate and dispose of their animals on their own in a timely manner to prevent spread of a FAD.
4. Composting will be the preferred method of disposal for most FADs since the disease-causing agent will most likely be inactivated during the process and minimal impacts will be incurred to the environment if performed correctly. Owners of susceptible animals may have sufficient land areas for bio-secure composting of animal carcasses but have limited access to necessary equipment or subject matter experts to perform it correctly. Composting as a carcass disposal option must be approved by appropriate authorities to ensure that potentially detrimental environmental impacts have been evaluated.
5. Disposal methods (rendering, incinerating, burial, etc.) other than composting may be appropriate in certain instances, but due to the increase in bio-security risks and other considerations (risk of spread by transport, environmental, etc.), would be used only in specific situations. Disposal options for infected materials including carcasses must be approved by the SV or USDA.
6. If the owner/operator does not have the resources to perform the prescribed depopulation and disposal in a timely manner, then additional resources will be sought from Federal and State logistics.
7. Disposal methods (rendering, incinerating, etc.) other than burial may be appropriate in certain instances, but due to the increase in bio-security risks and other considerations (risk of spread by transport, environmental etc.), would be used only in specific situations. Disposal options for infected materials including carcasses must be approved by the SV.
8. When local owner/operator resources are exhausted, the State will be able to provide depopulation and disposal assistance through the SERT. State resources for this activity are limited, thus contract resources may be required to address a widespread outbreak. Based on availability of depopulation and disposal resources, the Policy Group may decide to manage infected animals in an outbreak rather than depopulate and dispose of them.

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9. Since no one method of depopulating animals and disposing of their carcasses is acceptable in every situation, it is impossible to prescribe such methods in advance. Decisions on these methods will be made as the outbreak progresses—taking into account economic, health, environmental and other factors.

### **III. MISSION**

To depopulate designated animals and dispose of their carcasses such that bio-security is maintained, spread of the disease is prevented, and environmental impact is limited.

### **IV. ORGANIZATION AND ASSIGNMENT OF RESPONSIBILITIES**

#### **A. ORGANIZATION**

Depopulation and disposal of designated animals will be accomplished on site (whenever possible) under direction of the Case Manager and Biosecurity Officer per instructions from the IMT. Safety is of paramount importance thus the safety officer will review depopulation and disposal protocols and activities.

#### **B. RESPONSIBILITIES**

1. Owners of susceptible animals and farm operators have primary responsibility for depopulation of their designated animals and properly disposing of their carcasses.
2. The SV is responsible for:
  - (a) Authorizing the depopulation and disposal of designated animals.
  - (b) Providing direction and establishing policy that will designate which animals are to be depopulated to facilitate containment and eradication of the FAD.
  - (c) Establishing eradication procedures for depopulation and disposal of designated animals.

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3. The Case Manager is responsible for coordinating with the owner or contractors, the depopulation and disposal activities on premises. The Biosecurity Officer is responsible for ensuring that all personnel, including owners, follow proper procedures to maintain biosecurity and prevent the spread of the FAD.
4. The IMT Logistics Section is responsible for securing necessary equipment and personnel to accomplish depopulation and disposal should owners of designated animals be unable to do so.
5. The IMT Operations Section is responsible for developing the tactical plans, protocols, and guidance for disposal and depopulation activities. Depopulation and disposal guidance can be found in USDA publications and state plans.

### **V. CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS**

When directed by the SV, owners will depopulate designated animals and dispose of their carcasses according to approved procedures and instructions from the Case Manager. Should owners have insufficient resources to depopulate and dispose of their designated animals in a timely manner, the Case Manager will request appropriate and necessary assistance through the IMT Logistics and Operations Sections. Such activities will be communicated and documented through NC SPARTA and EMRS.

### **VI. REFERENCES**

- A. NC General Statute 166-A, North Carolina Emergency Management Act, as amended
- B. NC General Statute 106 as amended, April 2001.