



Township of Spallumcheen
Mass Carcass Disposal
Discussion Based Exercise

March 8, 2011

After Action Report



Report developed by:



Emergency Management Division

Funding provided by:



Administrative Handling Instructions

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Disclaimer

The Investment Agriculture Foundation of BC, the BC Ministry of Agriculture and Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) are pleased to participate in the delivery of this exercise funded through the Livestock Waste Tissue Initiative (LWTI). We are committed to working with our industry partners to address issues of importance to the agriculture and agri-food industry in British Columbia. Opinions expressed in this report, are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the Investment Agriculture Foundation, the B.C. Ministry of Agriculture or Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On March 8th 2011 a discussion based exercise was held in the Township of Spallumcheen involving 24 participants from a wide range of agricultural stakeholder groups and agencies. The purpose of this exercise was to have participants explore and discuss how the Township of Spallumcheen Farmed Animal Carcass Emergency Plan could be used to provide a framework for carcass disposal operations in an emergency situation. In this regard, participants offered their feedback about the plan as well as providing insight into additional issues that may arise during a mass carcass disposal emergency.

While the exercise scenario was a poultry barn fire the discussion also covered mass carcass disposal for other risks outlined in the plan (flood, wildfire, disease, etc)

The participants overwhelming felt that the opportunity to meet with a majority of the stakeholders to review the plan was beneficial and results in the region being more prepared to respond to this type of emergency.

It was recognized during the discussions that the poultry industry, through experience with normal mortality management as well as dealing with avian influenza outbreaks in BC in the past, is relatively well prepared to handle a mass carcass disposal emergency. It was also noted that the fact that BSE does not occur in poultry makes finding solutions easier.

The following recommendations may be put in place in order to resolve issues related to farm animal mass carcass disposal.

Where one or more “Responsible Agencies” have been identified, it is not to bind these agencies to completing these tasks. Instead, these agencies have been deemed by the exercise participants to be the most appropriate or best prepared to complete the identified task.

Recommendations:

1. Revise current Spallumcheen FAMCDEP utilizing information shared during exercise.

*Responsible Agency: Township of Spallumcheen/North Okanagan
Emergency Management*

2. While on farm composting appeared to be the primary option to deal with a poultry mass carcass disposal emergency there are a number of areas that could be investigated to develop additional alternative disposal options:
 - a. Pre-determine suitable emergency central composting and/or burial sites within the region that meet Canadian Food Inspection Agency and Ministry of Environment regulations.

Responsible Agency: Township of Spallumcheen, Investment Agriculture Foundation (IAF)

- b. Investigate the possibility of the Tolko mill in Spallumcheen accepting chicken carcasses/ in an emergency for incineration in their facility. Need to investigate if there is any interest from Tolko, if it is technically possible and if so what the capacity would be.

Responsible Agency: Local producers volunteered to approach Tolko, BC Ministry of Environment (MOE) to be involved

3. When an evacuation order has been given for a specific area it is crucial, for the well being of the animals in that evacuation area, that the local authority issue agriculture passes quickly (when safe) to farmers.

Responsible Agency: Township of Spallumcheen/North Okanagan Emergency Management

4. Provide link to AgriRecovery to participants.

Responsible Agency: Township of Spallumcheen/North Okanagan Emergency Management and/or Producer Organizations

5. Inform public and local elected officials of the importance of supporting local producers in developing solutions to mass carcass disposal emergencies in order to maintain a viable local agriculture community.

Responsible Agencies: Producer/Industry Associations, related industries, other agencies involved in agriculture in region

6. Send contact list from exercise out to all participants.

Responsible Agency: Township of Spallumcheen/North Okanagan Emergency Management

7. Combine the recommendations from all the mass carcass disposal exercises being held in BC and distribute them to the participants.

Responsible Agency: IAF

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PART 1 – EXERCISE OVERVIEW

A. Date and Location

The Township of Spallumcheen Mass Carcass Disposal Exercise was held on March 8, 2011 in the Township Council Chambers.

B. Scenario

The scenario was a poultry barn fire on a hot August long weekend resulting in a requirement for mass carcass disposal of poultry.

While the exercise scenario was a poultry barn fire the discussion also covered mass carcass disposal for other risks outlined in the plan (flood, wildfire, disease, etc)

C. Type of Exercise

This exercise is best described as a Hybrid Workshop –Tabletop exercise.

This exercise utilized a scenario to guide a large group discussion creating a unique training and exercise experience which allowed participants to explore and provide feedback on the Farmed Animal Mass Carcass Disposal Emergency Plan.

The scenario and questions had been sent to the participants before the exercise for them to review and prepare (Appendix B)

D. Purpose of Exercise

The purpose of this exercise is to explore and discuss the following emergency operations as outlined in the Spallumcheen Farmed Animal Carcass Emergency Plan (Spall FAMCDEP):

- Concept of operations for mass carcass disposal operations
- Methodologies for carcass disposal
- Resources for carcass disposal
- Compensation and recovery

by involving the following players:

- Township of Spallumcheen Staff
- Participants from other, member local authorities of the North Okanagan Emergency Program, (NOEM): Armstrong, Enderby, Lumby, Coldwater, Regional District of the North Okanagan and Vernon
- Regional waste management staff
- Producers
 - Poultry Producers
- Industry

- BC Chicken Marketing Board
- BC Chicken Growers Association
- BC Farm Animal Care Council
- Rendering Plants
- Composting service providers
- Poultry processors
- Poultry haulers
- Insurance Providers
- BC Ministry of Agriculture
- Ministry of Environment MOE
- Emergency Management BC
- Interior Health
- Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA)
- Investment Agriculture Foundation

in a tabletop/workshop exercise utilizing a poultry broiler barn fire scenario in the Township of Spallumcheen

E. Exercise Objectives

1. Review activation procedures of the Spallumcheen FAMCDEP
 - Expected actions
 - Discuss when the FAMCDEP would be activated
 - List who could activate
 - Outline steps taken to activate
 - Determine if activation process in plan realistically outlines what would happen
2. Validate the concept of operations for disposal operations as outlined in the Spallumcheen FAMCDEP
 - Expected Actions
 - Identify roles and responsibilities for a mass carcass disposal event
 - List tasks that need to be completed
 - Outline the response structure for a FAD and non FAD response
 - Discuss the safety and environmental issues
 - Outline how media information will be developed and disseminated
3. Review and assess methodologies and resources for mass carcass disposal as outlined in the Spallumcheen FAMCDEP
 - Expected Actions
 - Define the disposal methods that are available
 - Discuss the issues that are related to disposal of bovine carcasses

4. Identify any potential improvements to the Spallumcheen FAMCDEP
 - Expected Actions
 - Identify any areas where improvements can be made to the Spallumcheen FAMCDEP
5. Develop recommendations for solving the resource shortfalls and disposal challenges listed in Spallumcheen FAMCDEP
 - Expected Actions
 - List resources needed for disposal
 - Identify resource shortfalls
 - Identify solutions to the resource shortfalls
 - List disposal challenges
 - Identify solutions to disposal challenges
6. Review framework used for compensation and recovery
 - Expected Actions
 - Identify who would pay for the different components of the carcass disposal operation
 - Outline the process for private or government support (provincial or federal)
 - List what records must be kept

F. Exercise Evaluation

The exercise was not formally evaluated, as its purpose was simply to provide a venue to carry out specific conversations. During these conversations, key points were captured on a flip chart. Additionally, all exercise participants were provided the opportunity to complete a Participant Feedback Form which solicited written feedback on the Farmed Animal Mass Carcass Disposal Emergency Plan as well as on the design of the exercise.

G. Participant Attendance

There were 25 participants to the exercise. The attendees are listed in Appendix A

H. Exercise Conduct

The scenario was provided to the participants by means of PowerPoint slides after which a series of questions were asked to guide the discussion. Participants responded as to what they or their agency would be doing. It was run as a large group discussion. The scenario and questions are available from the contact on page 2 of this document.

PART 2 – EVALUATION

A. Overview

As mentioned previously, the purpose of this exercise was to allow participants to explore and discuss how the Spallumcheen Farmed Animal Carcass Emergency Plan could be used to provide a framework for carcass disposal operations. In this regard, participants offered their feedback about the plan as well as providing insight into additional issues that may arise during a mass carcass disposal event

Most, if not all, the expected actions within each objective of the exercise were realized during the exercise therefore the exercise met its objectives.

The participants overwhelming felt that the opportunity to meet with a majority of the stakeholders to discuss the plan was beneficial in being prepared to respond to this type of emergency.

It was also recognized during the discussions that the poultry industry, through experience with normal mortality management as well as dealing with avian influenza outbreaks in BC in the past, is relatively well prepared to handle a mass carcass disposal emergency. It was also noted that the fact that BSE does not occur in poultry makes finding solutions easier.

The following are recommendations that resulted from the discussions during the exercise.

B. Recommendations

Based on the input from participants a number of recommendations have been developed.

Please note: This document does not serve to bind participating agencies to complete these actions; rather, these actions have been identified as addressing a problem, issue or request arising from participant conversations and subsequent exercise design team analysis.

Where one or more “Responsible Agencies” have been identified, it is not to bind these agencies to completing these tasks. Instead, these agencies have been deemed by the exercise design team to be most the most appropriate or best prepared to complete the identified task.

1. Revise current SPALLUMCHEEN FAMCDEP utilizing information shared during exercise.

- Identify in the plan that the Armstrong landfill could be a final location for the composted chicken carcasses as it would be considered industrial waste. This option would only be utilized in emergency situations where there is no suitable land available for spreading the finished compost..
- Add Colonial Farms to the plan. In an emergency they can handle live birds that are at least 35 days old by altering their processing schedule. Contact is:
 - Allan King 250 546 3008
- Add Fly By Night Catching Ltd (catching services) and Reimers Transport (transportation of dead birds to West Coast Reductions) to plan. Contact for both is:
 - Joel Reimer 250 546 2558
- Include that the Chicken Marketing Board has mapping of chicken farms available during an emergency
- Add Natures Nutrients as a potential recipient of carcasses for composting. Contact is:
 - Kendall Johnson 250 546 3345 or cell 250 530 4096
- Include additional contact numbers for West Coast Reductions
 - West Coast Reductions (Kevin Wise)
 - 604 861 3283
 - 604 252 2067
- Create 1-2 page resource/contact list
 - Currently contacts and resources are spread throughout the
- Include information on role of Recovery Team in:
 - support for stress, practices to maintain mental health, Critical Incident Stress Debriefing(CISD) for farmers/responders
 - Donation management

Responsible Agency: Spallumcheen/ North Okanagan Emergency Management

2. While on farm composting appeared to be the primary option to deal with a poultry mass carcass disposal emergency there are a number of areas that could be investigated to develop additional alternative disposal options:

- a. **Pre-determine suitable emergency central composting and or burial sites within the region that meet Canadian Food Inspection Agency and Ministry of Environment regulations.**

The Spallumcheen FAMCDEP provides an overview of the site selection requirements when identifying a suitable location for the central composting or emergency burial of carcasses. However, the plan stops short of actually identifying where these suitable locations exist to meet MOE and CFIA regulations. Pre-determining these sites has the potential to mitigate the environmental and health risks of having to determine these sites quickly during an actual crisis.

The earlier Coldstream Farm Animal Mass Carcass Disposal exercise also recommended identifying these suitable sites as a potential action for dealing with carcass disposal (in the Coldstream scenario it is cattle instead of poultry). Perhaps this recommendation could be worked on jointly between Spallumcheen, Coldstream and North Okanagan Regional District. It was felt that pre-determining a central site for composting would be helpful although it was noted that there was public opposition to garden waste composting sites.

If the Township of Spallumcheen determines that this is the strategy they would like to follow there is funding available from the IAF to conduct the GIS/soil analysis studies to find suitable burial/composting sites.

Responsible Agency: Township of Spallumcheen, IAF

- b. **Investigate the possibility of the Tolko mill in Spallumcheen accepting chicken carcasses/bedding in an emergency for incineration in their facility. Need to investigate if there is any interest from Tolko, if it is technically possible and if so what the capacity would be.**

Responsible Agency: Local producers volunteers to approach Tolko, MOE to be involved

3. **When an evacuation order has been given for a specific area it is crucial, for the well being of the animals in that evacuation area, that the local authority issue agriculture passes quickly (when safe) to farmers.**

While this exercise focused on carcass disposal it was felt that in natural disaster scenarios such as wildfire that the importance of agricultural passes being quickly provided by local authorities is crucial for farmers to look after their animals.

Responsible Agency: Township of Spallumcheen

4. Provide link to AgriRecovery to participants

During the exercise AgriRecovery program was mentioned in terms of providing support to farmers. It was suggested that the link to the program be sent to participants.

<http://www4.agr.gc.ca/AAFC-AAC/display-afficher.do?id=1200408916804&lang=eng>

*Responsible Agency: Township of Spallumcheen/North Okanagan
Emergency Management and/or Producer Organizations*

5. Inform public and local elected officials of the importance of supporting local producers in developing solutions to mass carcass disposal emergencies in order to maintain a viable local agriculture community.

The importance of local agriculture production was recognized and that having plans to deal with farm animal mass carcass disposal is part of maintaining a viable responsible agriculture community. The challenge of finding solutions to farm animal mass carcass disposal and communicating the solutions to the public at large as well as elected officials was discussed. It was recognized that finding solutions to some of these emergencies is not easy however waiting until the emergency to occur to find solutions was not seen as an appropriate response either.

The importance of producers, producer organizations and other agencies involved in agriculture informing the public and elected officials of the challenges producers face is key to finding solutions to carcass disposal. The local government needs to be able to allocate staff time to assist with finding solutions.

Responsible Agencies: Producer/Industry Associations, related industries, other agencies involved in agriculture in region

6. Send contact list from exercise out to all participants.

One of the key accomplishments of the exercise was the familiarization of the stakeholder agency staff with each other. This will be extremely valuable if an emergency situation ever occurs. The importance of contact lists and the challenges of keeping them up to date were discussed. Sending out the contact sheet from this exercise was requested to assist everyone in maintaining their contact lists.

*Responsible Agency Spallumcheen/North Okanagan Emergency
Management*

7. Combine the recommendations from all the mass carcass disposal exercises being held in BC and distribute them to the participants.

The suggestion of combining all the recommendations from the mass carcass disposal exercises that have already occurred or will occur in BC and distributing them to the participants would be beneficial to many participants as there are differing discussions/recommendations occurring in each exercise.

Responsible Agency: IAF

C. Participant Feedback on Response

What is your assessment of the response efforts discussed during the exercise?

*Please rate, on a scale of 1 to 5, your overall assessment of the response efforts relative to the statements provided below, with 1 indicating **strong disagreement** with the statement and 5 indicating **strong agreement**.*

<u>Assessment Factor</u>	Rating of Agreement					Average of Responses
	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>				<i>Strongly Agree</i>	
a. The roles and responsibilities during a farm animal mass carcass event are well defined	1	2	3	4	5	3.9
b. It is clear which tasks need to be completed to deal with a farm animal mass carcass event	1	2	3	4	5	3.8
c. There is a straightforward process for determining which methodology would be best for dealing with a farm animal mass carcass event.	1	2	3	4	5	3.6
d. There are sufficient resources available for dealing with a farm animal mass carcass event.	1	2	3	4	5	4.0

Comments on any of the above assessment factors:

- From this exercise it appears that the chicken farmers are well versed to the agencies to contact and who will be involved

2. What areas of the response to a farm animal mass carcass disposal event need further research, resources or methodologies?

- Identified in presentation
- Disposal off farm location
- Communication from the local producer to the public
- Trigger point, scale at which Emergency Management becomes involved
- Phone number for weekend events

3. What improvements/changes could be made to the Spallumcheen Farm Animal Mass Carcass Disposal Plan.

- Covered in presentation
- Ensuring local farmers are aware
- Encouraging farmers to have emergency plans
- Seems fairly well planned just need to add contacts
- Update and add to resource list
- Unsure of what the plan is
- Identified through out the exercise
- It would be nice to see a roll up of all provincial tabletops on this topic to identify prov. level issues

4. What further exercises or training could be done to better prepare for a farm animal mass carcass disposal event

- Training exercises or events related to the cattle industry
- Unsure at this time
- Training session with local dairy/cattle farmers involving large farming operation farmers as leaders in a local community if they are interested

D. Participant Feedback on Exercise Design

Following the exercise, participants were invited to provide their feedback about any item not discussed, as well as about the exercise itself. The following charts consolidate all rankings and responses.

1. What is your assessment of the design and conduct of this discussion based exercise?

<u>Assessment Factor</u>	Rating of Agreement					Average of Responses
	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>				<i>Strongly Agree</i>	
a. Having the scenario and questions ahead of time better prepared you for the discussion in the today's exercise.	1	2	3	4	5	4.4
b. This discussion based exercise was well structured and organized.	1	2	3	4	5	4.1

<u>Assessment Factor</u>	Rating of Agreement					Average of Responses
	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>				<i>Strongly Agree</i>	
c. Discussion based exercises, such as this, are a valuable component in developing an integrated response.	1	2	3	4	5	4.4
d. The exercise achieved its identified objectives.	1	2	3	4	5	4.3
e. The exercise achieved your personal exercise objectives.	1	2	3	4	5	4.1

Comments on any of the above assessment factors:

Comments:

- Too much cut and paste

2. What components of this exercise worked very well and should be retained in future exercises?

- Inviting all the industry representatives was invaluable
- Learning how prepared the poultry industry is for an emergency
- How disposal can happen so easily
- Networking
- All of it
- Round table group discussion

3. What suggestions would you make to improve an exercise such as this?

- NA
- None at this time
- Does this exercise include the hobby or person that has free range poultry
- Tighter control over participants, goes to focus

APPENDICES

Appendices

A. Exercise Attendance List

NAME	Company/Agency	PHONE
Keith Louis	Okanagan Indian Band	250 309-4674
Jake Mitchell	Salmon Arm	250 833 2578
Ray Baylis	Armstrong	250 307 0491
Allan King	Colonial Farms - Armstrong	250 546 3008
Kathy Erickson	BC Poultry Marketing Board	604 855-8605
Witold Wince	Canadian Food Inspection Agency	250 260-5018
Mike Knauff	Emergency Management BC	250 371-5245
Greg Garrish	Emergency Management BC	250 371-6583
Jim MacDonald	City of Chilliwack	604 703-2751
Jim McNamara	Vernon RCMP.	250 260-7154
Joyce Christianson	Interior Health	250 851-7344
Misty Palm	Interior Health	250 851-7345
Cindy Graves	Township of Spallumcheen	250 546-3013
Lynda Shykora	Township of Spallumcheen	250 546-3013
Dale Danallanko	RDNO - Recycling & Disposal Facilities Coordinator	250 550-3744
Alastair Crick	Armstrong/Spallumcheen Fire Department	250 3062715
Rick Van Kleeck	Investment Agriculture Foundation	604 556-0128
Stuart MacDonald	JIBC	604 882-9248
Kevin Murphy	Ministry of Agriculture and Lands	250 549-0153
Kari Bredahl	Ministry of Agriculture and Lands	
Mike Reiner	Ministry of Environment	250 490-8206
Cliff Doherty	Columbia Shuswap Regional District	250 833 6556
Holli Fraser	NOEM Assistant	250 550-3528
Brent Watson	NOEM Emergency Program Coordinator	250 550-3246