

# Euthanasia and carcass disposal

## Information for small-flock poultry producers

### Poultry euthanasia for small-flock producers

As a small-flock owner, it is your responsibility and obligation under the [Animal Protection Act](#) to ensure your birds are euthanized humanely. There are several acceptable methods for euthanizing poultry including cervical dislocation, gas inhalation using carbon dioxide, and lethal injection with an appropriate veterinary drug.

Small-flock owners who wish to euthanize their flocks are advised to contact their local veterinarian. To find a veterinarian in your area, please visit the Alberta Veterinary Medical Association website at [www.abvma.ca](http://www.abvma.ca) (scroll down to the “Search Members and Practices” box, click on it, and you can search by your location).

### Disposal of poultry carcasses for small-flock producers

When poultry are euthanized because of health, welfare or other issues, consideration must be given to appropriate disposal of the carcasses. Proper carcass disposal will reduce the likelihood of predators on your premises and reduce the spread of disease and odour.

Before deciding which method of disposal will best suit your situation, consider time limitations, disease containment, pathogen elimination, location of disposal, and local/municipal regulations.

There are several acceptable methods to dispose of poultry carcasses in Alberta, which include composting, burial, landfills, and burning in an incinerator. Alberta's [Disposal of Dead Animals Regulation](#) outlines the specific requirements associated with these methods. In particular, sections 6 through 14 outline the requirements for disposal of **diseased** animals through acceptable options including rendering, composting, burial, and burning. Section 6 also requires that disposal of a diseased animal must be done under the direction of the Chief Provincial Veterinarian or an inspector appointed under the *Animal Health Act*.

For clarification on any proposed disposal method, please contact Alberta Agriculture and Forestry's Inspection and Investigation Branch at 403-755-1474 (you can call toll-free in Alberta by first dialing 310-0000).

Please note that if composting is selected, there are several methods available, and some of them are more effective than others. More information can be found on this [web page about poultry mortality composting](#). If composting, the final product should not be used in gardens or on produce crops; however, it can be dispersed on cereal or oilseed croplands.

For guidance on incinerating carcasses, please refer to Alberta's [Code of Practice for Small Incinerators](#) made under the *Environmental Protection and Enhancement Act*.

If an incinerator is not available, an open fire is another option for disposal of poultry carcasses, provided you have approval from your local municipality or county and from Alberta Environment and Parks, which can be reached toll-free at 310-ESRD (3773), fax: 780-427-4407, email: [ESRD.Info-Centre@gov.ab.ca](mailto:ESRD.Info-Centre@gov.ab.ca)

**For more information about the content of this fact sheet**, please call Alberta Agriculture and Forestry's Inspection and Investigation Branch at 403-755-1474. You can call toll-free in Alberta by first dialing 310-0000.