Mass Poultry Mortality
Burial in Tennessee

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Introduction

- **NOW** is the time to plan for a mass mortality event (HPAI break)
- Options:
  - Mortality composting (in-house, outside)
  - Burial
- What you can do
  - Burial site: **Choose AND Evaluate**
  - Secure access to carbon materials to compost
Burial Sites Must Meet Standards

- Only acceptable if in-house composting is impractical
- Standards:
  - 300 ft uphill/150 ft downill from private wells
  - 165 ft from property lines/public use areas
  - 100 ft from surface waters, drainage ways
  - 2 ft or more from water table/bedrock
  - Avoid sandy soils/rocky
Be Aware

Burial sites exceeding 1 acre in areal extent:
– Permits required (waived in emergency?)
– Property **title disclosures may be required**
– Decomposition poor, leaching long term
Wood Chips
Mature Holstein Mass Mortality: 1 year
Utility Wood Chips
1,200 lb horse: 1 year
Treatments (L-R): woodchips, sawdust, mulch, soil
HPRM Mortality Compost Windrow

Three Key Components: Base, Core, Cap

- **Base Layer**: 10 – 15 inches thick
- **Core**: 8 – 12 inches thick
- **Cap**: Uniform mix of carcasses, eggs, litter, feed etc.

Water, heat, and carbon dioxide production.

Oxygen flow:
- 6 to 8 feet
- 12 - 15 feet wide
Where is the Space?

This is one reason burial was used in TN HPAI
The public well database in TN is protected, there are public wells in several parts of Tennessee. Most private wells are not in the database. Burial of tens of thousands of mature chickens require a very large burial pit:
- Depth
- Area
State Veterinary Office

• Decomposition is extremely slow in burial pits, so the long term risk of mass mortality burial is high

• The clear preference is in-house composting, particularly for broilers/pullets

• Requests all complexes provide grower premise ID & disposal method
  – Burial sites **MUST BE PRE-SELECTED**
  – If a site is not pre-selected, may not be usable
Summary

- Burial is an option, but sites **MUST** be chosen ahead of time
  - Seek assistance – UT Extension, NRCS, TPA
  - Dig a test pit
  - Know the long term risk is groundwater quality is high
- Composting **works** – as a SME I say this with confidence
Questions?