

Sustainable Livestock Mortality Management

*Mark Hutchinson: Extension Professor, University of Maine
J. Craig Williams: Extension Educator, Penn State University
Jean Bonhotal: Director, Cornell Waste Management Institute
NESARE Grant ENE08-108

Introduction:

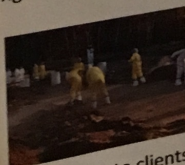
The Northeast Carcass Management (NCM) Team trained 55 Agriculture Service Providers from Cooperative Extension, NRCS, State Agriculture agencies and private consultants on sustainable carcass mortality management using static aerated composting methodology in Pennsylvania, New York and Maine. Training was provided through a combination of field-based workshop and webinars, although field-based trainings were preferred by the participants. A resource notebook containing fact sheets, DVD's, article reprints, posters, and NRCS standards and a website with educational resources were also provided to support the project trainees. After learning through the project, the "55 trainers" provided 57 regional and local training programs for 3,000 participants who included other additional agricultural service providers and livestock producers in all thirteen NESARE states. The trainers provided research-based information showing that composting carcass mortalities is economically and environmentally sustainable. An additional 2,400 received mailed information on carcass mortality management, bringing the total number of people educated on this topic to 5,400.

Participants received information in the following areas of carcass management: composting methodology, compost site development, compost feedstocks, compost recipe development, pile management, bio-security, compost utilization and development of a catastrophic management plan.



Objectives:

- Participants will have a clear understanding of the principles of carcass management



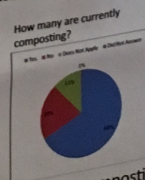
- Participants will be able to articulate these principles to clients and colleagues.
- Participants will be able to plan and deliver programs, services, and/or projects that meet the needs of farmers and/or agricultural service providers.

Milestones:

- The Northeast Carcass Management Team conducted three "Train-the-Trainer" workshops in southern Pennsylvania, upstate New York, and Maine. These intensive two-day training sessions immersed participants in sustainable carcass management through composting.
- Members of the NCM team in conjunction with members of the "NESARE 55" held 57 Sustainable Carcass Management training programs during over the four years of the project.
- These programs provided research-based information to over 3000 participants. Participants for these programs were Agriculture Service Providers, producers and policy makers.
- The total number of training programs presented by service providers exceeds our milestone of 50.

Outcomes:

- In 2008, only 10% of agriculture service providers recommended composting as a carcass management tool.
- As a result of project's education programs, 97% of the 27 agriculture service providers surveyed in 2011 now recommend composting as a carcass disposal management tool. The rate of recommendation was 100% if they had attended a composting training program.
- Thirty-four of 79 producers responding to a survey, reported that carcass composting has a positive economic impact.



- A third of those composting did so as result of attending a NESARE training program within the last four years.

Conclusion:

As a result of the Train-the-Trainer program, the NCM leadership team presented education programs on carcass composting management throughout the USA, including, Virginia, West Virginia, Montana, South Dakota and Michigan. This program continues to have a positive effect on sustainable carcass management methodology, implementation and policy not only in the Northeast but nationwide.