

Aquatic Animal Health Standards Commission Report

October 2008

USA Comments

CHAPTER X.X.X.

~~GUIDELINES ON HANDLING AND DISPOSAL OF CARCASSES AND WASTES OF AQUATIC ANIMALS~~

Article X.X.X.1.

Introduction

~~In the event of any aquatic animal dying due to disease or accidentally due to different causes during aquaculture operations, or in the wild, The scope of this Chapter these guidelines is the handling and disposal of carcasses and wastes of aquatic animals in the course of routine aquaculture operations, as well as in exceptional situations such as mass killing euthanasia and mass mortality (including in the wild).~~

~~In the event of aquatic animal mortalities of a significant nature in aquaculture or in the wild, the Competent Authority should be notified so that necessary steps can be taken to dispose of the dead aquatic animals, in order to minimise the risk for possible spread of disease.~~

~~The method for disposal should be based on judgments depending on the cause of mortality of aquatic animals (disease, intoxication, environmental changes, etc.) and the possible risk of introducing a listed disease if no precautionary steps are taken. Disposal methods should take into consideration a range of factors, including the cause of mortality. It may be appropriate to carry out a risk assessment on the disposal options. Relevant environmental and waste management legislation should be adhered to.~~

~~Carcasses to be disposed of and the disposal process to be chosen should be under the supervision of the *Competent Authority*. Storage, transport and disposal of aquatic animal carcasses should be carried out in adherence with all relevant local and national legislation. In the case of killing euthanizing of animals for disease control purposes or unusually large mortalities of unknown origin, this may be require approval from, or supervision by, the *Competent Authority*.~~

~~The guidelines in this Annex are general in nature. The choice of one or more of the recommended methods should be in compliance with relevant local and national legislation. *The guidelines should be applied in conjunction with procedures described for the killing of aquatic animals in Appendix XXXXX.*~~

Rationale: The term euthanasia is derived from the Greek terms *eu* meaning good and *thanatos* meaning death. A 'good death' is one that occurs with minimal pain and distress. In the context of these guidelines, euthanasia is the act of inducing humane death in an animal.

The word “be” is an unnecessary word in this sentence.

Article X.X.X.2.

Definitions

For the purpose of these guidelines, the following definitions are relevant to the disposal of aquatic animal carcasses and their wastes:

- **Aquatic animal.** For the purposes of this chapter, ‘*aquatic animal*’ refers to the following: *live fish* (including eggs and gametes), *molluscs*, *decapods* (lobsters, shrimps, crabs) from aquaculture or the wild. The definition does not cover water living *amphibians*, *reptiles*, *birds* or *mammals*.
- ~~**Aquatic animal carcass** means the entire body or parts body/trunk of an *aquatic animal* subsequent to killing or death.~~
- ~~**Aquatic animal population** means a group of holding units with *aquatic animals* sharing a common defined origin.~~
- ~~**Aquatic animals for slaughter/harvest/killing/culling** means *aquatic animals* that are destined to be transported or taken to *fish slaughtering premises* or other *processing plants* preparing products for human consumption or for disposal.~~
- ~~**Aquatic animal offal/waste** means the whole or parts of an *aquatic animal* and *aquatic animal* products not approved for human consumption including sludge and sieve material collected during slaughtering.~~
- ~~**Biogas production** means decomposition of infected material by micro-organisms in an anaerobic environment.~~
- ~~**Container** means a transport appliance:

 - of a permanent type and sufficiently strong to enable repeated use;
 - specially constructed to facilitate *transportation of live aquatic animals* by one or several means of transport;
 - provided with fittings that make it easy to manipulate, particularly for trans-shipment from one kind of transport vehicle to another;
 - constructed in a water tight way, easy to load and unload and capable of being cleansed and disinfected between transport;
 - ensuring safe and optimal transport of live aquatic animals from a welfare point of view.~~
- ~~**Composting** means decomposition of infected material by micro-organisms under aerobic conditions.~~
- ~~**Death** means irreversible loss of brain activity in fish and crustaceans.~~
- ~~**Decontamination** means all stages of cleaning and disinfection.~~

- **Disposal** means the inactivation of the pathogen with reduction of the *aquatic animal carcass* and parts of it to constituent components, e.g. by means of i.e. burial, chemical or thermal treatment. Disposal means reduction of *aquatic animal carcasses* to its constituent components and inactivation of the pathogens of concern (e.g. by means of burial, chemical or thermal treatment.)
- Disposal plant means a plant approved by the *Competent Authority* for the disposal of *aquatic animal carcasses* and waste thereof.
- Ensiling means the process of grinding the *aquatic animal carcasses* and reducing the pH in the mass by adding an organic acid. The pH should must be kept below 4.0 for the duration of the process.
- High risk waste means *aquatic animals* or *aquatic animal carcasses*, waste or offal that constitute, or are suspected of constituting, a serious health risk to animals or humans. Waste that is not *high risk waste* is considered of low risk.
- **High risk waste material** means animal wastes that constitute or are suspected of constituting a serious health risk to animals or humans including:
 - dead aquatic animals; including companion animals that the *Competent Authority* make special provisions for;
 - aquatic animals that are being killed due to disease;
 - wastes of aquatic animals containing residues of substances that may represent a serious health risk to animals or humans or products of animal origin that is deemed unsuitable for human consumption due to such residual concentrations;
 - aquatic animals that show clinical signs or at slaughter show pathological signs of disease that is transmissible to fish as well as parts of and wastes from such fish.
- **Low risk waste** means; *aquatic animal* wastes other than with the exception of what is defined as *high risk wastes* and that do not constitute serious risk for the spread of disease that may be transmitted to humans or animals, such as fresh wastes from aquatic animals from plants producing fish or fish products for consumption.
- **Mass destruction** means an emergency destruction and disposal of the entire population of aquatic animals for disposal.
- **Rendering** means a closed processing system for destruction of infective material in *aquatic animals* by means of mechanical and thermal treatment.
- **Technology** means the process used for disposal of aquatic animals.
- **Transport** means the *bio-secure* removal of *aquatic animals*, *aquatic animal carcasses* or parts of *aquatic animals* from the infected *aquaculture establishment* to the site of disposal.
- **Waste water** means effluent fluids from the slaughtering and processing process including water from the cleaning process of the slaughtering or processing plant premises.

Rationale: For consistency and convention, all definitions within the *Code* should be included in Chapter 1.1.1. We have moved those definitions to that chapter.

Article X.X.X.[3.2](#)

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