



## Boulder County Small Acreage Management Newsletter

Summer 2007

<http://www.coopext.colostate.edu/boulder/AG/smallacreage.shtml>

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### From the Extension Agent

#### **In this Edition:**

- Euthanasia Considerations – p. 2
- Animal Diseases – p. 6

### **Are We Out of the Drought?**

By all indications Boulder County is not currently experiencing drought. Grass growth has been phenomenal this spring and ditches appear to be providing ample water to most areas. However, (insert precautionary tone) be advised that hot summer conditions without summer rains may create drought conditions by August. Be prepared to alter your grazing/haying practices based on moisture and grass growth. See US Drought Monitor updates on this page:

<http://www.drought.unl.edu/dm/monitor.html>

### **Past SAM Newsletters Online**

We've gotten requests to make past newsletter edition available. These are on the SAM page linked above in the header. Lots of good info in past editions.

### **SAM Email Listserv**

If you are receiving this newsletter for the first time and are not subscribed to the [boco\\_small\\_acreage@colostate.edu](mailto:boco_small_acreage@colostate.edu) listserv, you may request subscription on the SAM website (linked in header above). This quarterly e-newsletter and other timely info will be distributed via this email listserv.

Subscribers may use the listserv also as a SAM info gathering mechanism. For example, you may inquire about who is available in the area supply hay, to perform swathing/baling, etc.

The listserv is not a marketplace, however. Because it is hosted on the CSU server, **NO COMMERCIAL EMAILS ARE ALLOWED. DO NOT ATTEMPT TO SELL ANYTHING VIA THE LISTSERV – THANKS.** Use the newsletter ad section for these purposes.

Currently, there are 146 subscribers to the listserv (up from 138 last quarter).

### **SAM Weed ID and Control Workshops**

The 2007 Small Acreage Weed ID and Control Workshops are described in this brochure: <http://www.coopext.colostate.edu/boulder/AG/weeds%20Workshop%20Brochure2007.pdf>

## **CART Manual Available**

The Country Acres Resource Team (composed of Extension, NRCS, etc. colleagues in Northern Colorado) have released their [“A Manual for Success”](#) for purchase.

## **2008 Small Acreage Management Conference**

The Colorado Agriculture Big and Small Conference will be including a small acreage management day on Saturday, February 23 at Island Grove Regional Park. Stay tuned for more details.

## **Boulder County Going Local**

The [BOULDER COUNTY GOING LOCAL!](#) Campaign has been initiated by the founders of Boulder Valley Relocalization, and is presented by Boulder Going Local, Inc. (a social venture) in collaboration with Boulder Independent Business Alliance (BIBA), Boulder County Farmers' Markets, Downtown Boulder Inc., City of Boulder Office of Environmental Affairs, local citizens, local food growers, local government and many others to help build community self-sufficiency and strengthen the local economy through partnership, collaboration and engagement. Extension is collaborating on this project in an effort to help stimulate the local agriculture economy.

### ***Adrian Card***

Adrian Card  
Agriculture/Natural Resources Extension Agent  
SAM Program Coordinator  
CSU Cooperative Extension, Boulder County

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## **Euthanasia Considerations**

**By Meg Sitarik, SAM volunteer**

All animal owners at some point have to deal with euthanizing a beloved pet. This creates a unique set of problems for the large animal owner. Whether it is planned ahead of time for a geriatric horse or an unexpected event such as trauma or colic, the stress and emotional piece can be crushing. To decrease the stress for large and small animal owners it's important to have a plan in place prior to the event.

The purpose of this article is to provide the necessary information to make an informed decision. Knowledge is power. This will not help the grief you will undoubtedly feel, but it will make the time easier.

Everyone has different ways of handling this situation. There is no 'right' way. Some folks send the animal to a rendering facility; others bury or cremate the body. Some want to be present others don't. Keep in mind this is a plan for you and your family. Make it fit your needs financially, geographically, emotionally and spiritually.

Before making any decisions you need to be aware of State and County laws. Almost everything I found is focused on large production farms that have many animals used for meat, dairy etc.

[The Colorado Statutes for dead animals is 25-1-612](#)

### [Dead Animal Disposition Penalty](#)

No person shall put any dead animal or part of the carcass of any dead animal into any lake, river, creek, pond, road, street, alley, lane, lot, field or meadow, or common or in place within one mile of the residence of any person, unless the

same and every part thereof is burned or buried at least two feet underground.

In summary, the rest of the Statute states this is a misdemeanor punishable by a fine and/or time in the county jail. You will also be charged with additional offenses and fines for every 24 hours the animal is there.

The Longmont city Ordinance 9.04.030 reads:

It is unlawful for any person to dispose of a dead animal within city limits. Such animals shall be taken beyond the city limits and disposed of at a rendering plant or at some other suitable facility.

County Laws

The rules governing each county are different. Contact the Health Department in your county.

Once you are aware of the rules you will need to spend a few days thinking about the rest of your plan. Do you want to be present and if so will you need a friend there for support? How do you want to dispose of the animal? What is your budget? What resources are available? Do you have neighbors with heavy equipment? Most importantly, where will you euthanize the animal? Location is one of the most important issues. The best location is out in the open close to where you plan to bury the animal or close to where the transport truck will have easy access. The worst place to euthanize a large animal is in the stall or any small space. The reason for this is the issue of removing the animal from the stall. Once you have decided these things you can move on to your actual plan.

There are several options available:

1. Burial
2. Cremation
3. Rendering
4. Composting

**Burial** without cremation is common for folks with large properties outside the city limits. Things to consider are: How do plan to dig the

hole? Many are fortunate enough to have friends and neighbors with a backhoe or a front-end loader. If not there are excavation companies that will help. How big and deep should it be? When I euthanized Sunny, AKA Grandpa, this past November my neighbor used his Front-end Loader to dig the hole. For the 15 hand, 1000 lb. horse he made it approximately 10'x10' x 8' deep. One side sloped down like a ramp to make it easier to ease Grandpa to his resting place. A simple cross, that my son made, was placed on his grave and an Ornamental Flowering Pear tree planted.

Other considerations when burying a large animal is the proximity to water, especially wells, and the depth of the water table (underground water). According to State Law CRS 25-1-612 there should be a minimum of 5 feet between animal and water table and 150 feet down gradient from any ground water supply. These are critical factors to prevent contamination. State guidelines also suggest sprinkling lime over the animal to facilitate decomposition.

**Cremation** is another possibility. In January of this year, my best friend of 20 years, Wiz, had to be euthanized. With the ground frozen solid it was impossible to dig even with a backhoe. Rendering or composting were not options for me at the time. There are several Pet Crematories in the area. Services varied as did the price. A list will be provided at the end of this article.

Most crematories price by the pound. It is expensive but they “happily take credit cards”. Transportation to the facility is another factor. Some places will transport the animal others do not but do provide a list of companies that will transport. These prices also varied widely. It pays to shop around. Even if you don't think you will be dealing with this in the near future it is best to collect the basic information now. This will give you a familiarity with the process along with time to digest it and formulate questions you may have such as do you want to keep the horseshoes? Make a list of phone numbers you

will need, this way you are not trying find numbers at the last minute.

The crematories in the area prefer a call ahead of time however they are aware that this is not always possible. Planning ahead gives you the ability to schedule the Vet and transportation. I scheduled the transportation for an hour and a half after the Vet left. This gave me an hour to say my final good byes. I did not watch them load my horse. For me that memory wasn't necessary or wanted. Remember everyone has different ways of dealing with these situations. To others this may be an important part of the process.

Next is to consider what to do with the ashes which should be ready for pick-up with in 2 – 3 days. You may take them home, keep them on your fireplace hearth, bury them or have the crematory dispose of them. Some folks just want a few of the ashes in an urn or special locket. (There is a company that will make the ashes into diamonds.....starting at \$25,000!!!) There are lots of urn options, big, small, plain, ornate, stone, metal, wood etc. Wiz was returned in the basic container included in the price. It is a small silver metal canister measuring 15 inches tall and 12 inches in diameter. How do you plan to get the ashes home? This must be considered because they are heavy, 2 – 5% of the animals' body weight. At 1600LBs, (Can you imagine the size of the diamond?!) Wiz was in the 4 – 5% range. His ashes were 70 plus pounds. Some places will ask if you want to witness the cremation, (a definite no for me). Once again, no right or wrong just whatever works for you. Since the ground was still frozen I took Wiz home with me; he spent the winter on my hearth covered with a colorful swath of fabric. This spring he was buried next to my old horse Grandpa. We dug a hole 5'x5'x3' deep, mixed his ashes in the soil and planted a tree on him. A Weeping Cherry tree seemed appropriate. It's comforting for me to have them "home". One last piece of information is unpleasant but necessary. Does the crematory need to quarter the horse? Do they need to cut the horse into quarters to fit into the incinerator? (This is the

reason to not euthanize in a stall.) Information for each crematory will be included at the end of this article.

**Rendering** is another option. The facility closest to this area is in Greeley. This service was free years ago. Currently there is a fee of \$100 - \$125. They are open everyday. It is requested that you call early in the morning to ensure a spot on the truck. I used this method years ago before I realized there were other options available. The truck arrived I pointed to the horse and went in the house. Now you would have to point and hand over a check. I will say it's best to go into the house because there are usually a lot of other carcasses in the truck and some images are best, not floating around in the memory bank.

**Composting** is not suited for the average horse owner. This method is used when there are a large number of animals to deal with. A good example is last winters blizzards that killed thousands of cattle in the southwestern part of the State. Disposing this many animals has lots of logistical problems as well as public health concerns. For more information: [www.cvmbs.colostate.edu/ilm/proinfo/composti ng](http://www.cvmbs.colostate.edu/ilm/proinfo/composti ng).

After gathering all the information needed it's best to take a few days or weeks to think about each option before making a final plan. After you have decided what works best take a 3 x 5 index card and list the following information.

Horse's name:

Your contact info: (For the farm/large animal caretaker)

Vet: Name & phone number.

Second choice in case yours isn't available.

Plan: What you would like to do with the animal.

Euthanize: Location

Burial: Location

Excavator: Name & number.

Cremation: Name & number.

Transport: Name & number, if needed.

Renderer: Name & number of facility.

Compost: Location

Transport: Name & number if needed.

This card should be kept where it will be easily available. I keep mine taped to the inside of the kitchen cupboard above the phone. When you are out of town make sure the person caring for the animal knows where to find this card.

One last subject I need to mention is grief. Grieving the loss of anything, person, horse, dog, cat, hamster, health, job or marriage just to name a few, is a long process. Everyone's experience is unique. Grieving a pet can be difficult many people do not understand why someone would grieve the loss of an animal after all, it was "just a horse, cat, dog etc". Keep in mind that most people have never had a close relationship with an animal. Nor have most people had much experience dealing with grief therefore are very uncomfortable with the grieving process, their own or someone else's. Experience has taught me that folks want to say something comforting but just don't have the words or are afraid they might say "the wrong thing". The most comforting words ever said to me were, "I have been wanting to hug you, may I?"

There are many resources available for support and information. The best I found is the Grief and Education Center of Hospice. They offer information and counseling for all types of losses. I asked about animals and was surprised and pleased that they have lots of information specific to animal loss and happy to share it and offer support.

In summary, there are many options available to the large animal owner. Gathering information ahead of time and having a plan will decrease the stress of the moment giving you time and energy to focus on the most important task at hand, being there for the one you love.

## Cremation

### Pet Cremation Services

12000 W 52<sup>nd</sup> Ave  
Wheat Ridge, CO 80033  
303-403-1647

[www.petcremationservices.com](http://www.petcremationservices.com)

Large & small animals  
Do not quarter large animals  
Individual cremation:  
200 – 400lbs, \$400  
401 – 600 lbs, \$580  
601 – 800 lbs, \$800  
801 – 1000 lbs, \$1050  
1001 – 1300 lbs, \$1200  
Over 1300 lbs, an additional \$1.20/ lb

Witnessed individual cremation  
Communal cremation: cremated in group, no remains returned  
Home pick-up: within 35 miles, \$175 then \$2 per additional mile  
Private grieving room  
Large selection of urns, lockets, headstones etc. on site

### Precious Memories Pet Cemetery & Crematory

5815 East Hwy 14  
Ft. Collins, CO  
970-482-7557

Web site in near future

Large & small animals  
Large animals will be quartered  
Individual cremation: \$1.00 per pound  
Burial in cemetery: \$900 includes standard granite marker & perpetual care  
Do not provide transportation  
Large selection of urns, headstones etc. on site

## Transport

Crossroads Towing  
Ft. Collins  
970-419-8697

Pick-up & Delivery: \$125 plus \$3 per mile.

Experienced

## **Rendering**

Weld County Bi-Products, Inc.  
1138 N. 11<sup>th</sup> Ave  
Greeley, CO  
970-352-1788  
1-800-752-0391

Open every day  
Pick-up fee: \$100-\$125

## **Grief Information**

Hospice Care Grief and Education Center  
1585 Patton Dr.  
Boulder, CO 80303  
303-604-5300  
[www.hospicecareonline.org](http://www.hospicecareonline.org)

Colorado State University Argus Institute  
[www.argusinstitute.colostate.edu/grief](http://www.argusinstitute.colostate.edu/grief)

Cornell University Pet Loss Support Line  
[www.vet.cornell.edu/public/petloss](http://www.vet.cornell.edu/public/petloss)

American Veterinary Medical Association  
[www.avma.org](http://www.avma.org)

Look under Care for Pets

Pet Loss and Grief Support Page  
[www.olywa.net/peregrine/petloss](http://www.olywa.net/peregrine/petloss)

Includes ten tips on coping with pet loss.

## **Animal Diseases**

**By Sharon Bokan, SAM volunteer**

We have been informed by the media on tuberculosis and West Nile Virus affecting humans. As a small acreage owner with just a few animals, where do you go to get updated information on diseases that may be on the upswing and what you need to do to protect your animals? In this article, we will look at several sources of updated information and take a look at several diseases. This information is provided

not to scare or panic animal owners but to give them tools to be informed.

The first line of defense is your veterinarian. He or she should be informed on any diseases whose levels are above normal. Several other sources of updated information are the Colorado Department of Agriculture (CDOA) Animal Division, Colorado State University Diagnostic Lab, and Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) (for West Nile Virus information). The websites for these agencies are included at the end of the article. The CDOA website is undergoing an update in the next few months. Once it is complete, the website will provide updated information on animal diseases and potential outbreaks with links to agencies and universities that have the most current information or who are doing the research on that disease. From Dr. Carl Heckendorf, Director of Livestock Emergency Preparedness, one of the best steps small acreage owners can take is to have their premise (acreage) registered through the National Animal Identification System (NAIS) program (see Small Acreage newsletter Spring 2006). This program aids agencies in identifying the origin of diseased animals and their movement so that the animals can be isolated and prevent the spread of disease.

Horse owners still need to be concerned with West Nile Virus (WNV). Since WNV made its appearance in the early 2000's, there have been three areas identified that have had consistent higher activity. These areas are the Grand Junction area, along the Arkansas valley, and the triangular area between Fort Collins, Greeley, and Boulder. In 2006 there were 7 reported cases of WNV in horses. The good news about WNV is that there is a vaccine for horses. Horse owners should vaccinate their horses and get the yearly booster shots. Horse owners should also manage their properties to minimize or eliminate shallow pools and puddles which act as breeding grounds for mosquitoes. Owners can also keep horses in during peak mosquito times of early morning and early evening and by using mosquito repellent.



Also of concern for horse owners and other animal owners is Vesicular stomatitis (VSV). Vesicular stomatitis causes blisters and ulcers on the tongue, mouth, teats and coronary bands of horses, cattle and swine. Due to the pain from the ulcers, animal stop eating and weaken. VSV's symptoms are similar to those of foot and mouth disease (FMD) and several other diseases. It is important that symptoms like these are reported to you veterinarian so that the exact cause can be determined. If you transport you horse to shows or fairs, you need to check with the organizers for any health certification requirements. You can also find guidelines on the state website listed at the end of this article.

For cattle owners, several diseases to be aware of are brucellosis and bovine tuberculosis (TB). Colorado has maintained its Accredited Free Status for both of these diseases but the diseases are not eradicated elsewhere and animal owners must be vigilant to maintain this status. Brucellosis is a contagious bacterial disease that affects both animals and humans. In cattle the disease causes abortions and weak calves at birth. It is spread by contaminated forages or contact with calves or aborted calves of infected cows. Humans can contract the disease through contact with infected organs and unpasteurized milk. Brucellosis is of concern in Wyoming, Montana, and Idaho due to contact between domestic cattle and Bison from Yellowstone National Park. Cattle can also be exposed to the disease by contact with wild canids such as fox, coyote and stray dogs. They drag after births and dead or aborted calves from herds. There is a vaccine for brucellosis that depending on your risk factors an owner may want to consider. The state of Colorado is Accredited Free of brucellosis, but animal owners need to assist the state in maintaining that status.

Colorado has also been an Accredited Free state since 1974 for Bovine tuberculosis. The bacteria at cause are Mycobacterium bovis which affects cattle, humans and all warm blooded vertebrates. The most common source of transmission is through respiration. The disease is usually not detected until it is in a well advanced stage.

Owners must be aware that even though Colorado has maintained its Free Status for 30 years, the disease is not eradicated and they must comply with the stringent laws and regulations to help maintain the Accredited Free Status.

For sheep and goat owners, the disease of concern is scrapie, a disease of the central nervous system (CNS). It causes degeneration of the CNS resulting in behavioral changes such as uncoordinated movements, tremors and eventually death. The disease is part of the Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathies (TSE's) family which includes Chronic Wasting Disease and Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathies (mad cow disease). It is spread by animal to animal contact and the transmission agent is found in a variety of animal tissues and fluids. Diagnosis is through behavioral changes such as itching, rubbing (therefore the name scrapie), tremors, high stepping gait, "bunny hop", and others. Positive diagnosis is through examination of brain tissue for the presence of the prion protein thought to be the cause. In sheep, biopsy of the third eyelid tissue on live animals can be used for diagnosis. There is evidence that sheep with short incubation periods may be more susceptible than those with longer periods. In the United States 90% of scrapie cases has been in "black faced" sheep mainly Suffolk. However, in other countries, it occurs in mostly "white faced" sheep.

### **What are steps that small acreage owners can take to protect their animals against diseases?**

1. Isolate new animals for at least 4 weeks.
2. Remove and isolate sick animals from the rest of the herd.
3. Necropsy all unexplainable deaths.
4. Control birds and vermin (mice, rats, fox, coyote, etc.).
5. Regularly clean feeding and watering equipment.
6. Know the source of new animals.
7. Vaccinate or test animals if appropriate or required.

8. Maintain animal health by providing adequate nutrition and water, exercise and watching for symptoms.
9. Maintain fences to minimize interaction with neighboring animals.
10. Participate in the NAIS by obtaining premise ID for your property.

### References and information sources:

Colorado Department of Agriculture, Animal Industry Division

<http://www.ag.state.co.us/animals/LivestockDisease/BySpecies.html>

Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment

<http://www.cdphe.state.co.us/dc/zoonosis/wnv/index.html>

Colorado State University Diagnostic Lab

<http://www.dlab.colostate.edu/webdocs/general/lablines.html>

<http://www.dlab.colostate.edu/webdocs/general/special.html>

<http://www.dlab.colostate.edu/currentnews.htm>

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4-H Member/Leader: 20 cents/word

General Public, Individual: 25 cents/word

General Public, Business/Show: 30 cents/ word

**Print Ad Rates are as follows:**

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Half Page Ad: \$80.00

Full Page Ad: \$100.00

**Email Adrian Card for more details**

**[acard@co.boulder.co.us](mailto:acard@co.boulder.co.us)**