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AB-411 Livestock carcasses: disposal: composting. (2025-2026)

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Assembly Bill No. 411

CHAPTER 613

An act to add Section 19348.2 to the Food and Agricultural Code, relating to livestock.

[Approved by Governor October 11, 2025. Filed with Secretary of State October 11, 2025.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 411, Papan. Livestock carcasses: disposal: composting.

Existing law prohibits a dead animal hauler or any other person from transporting a dead animal to any place, other than to certain specified facilities or destinations, unless a certain waiver is granted by the State Veterinarian, as specified.

Existing law requires the Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery to adopt and revise minimum standards for solid waste handling, transfer, composting, transformation, and disposal, as prescribed. Pursuant to this authority, the department has adopted a regulation that prohibits the composting of unprocessed mammalian tissue except when received from certain sources.

This bill would, notwithstanding those prohibitions, authorize any part of a livestock carcass resulting from a routine livestock mortality event or on-farm processing to be composted if certain requirements are met, including, among others, that the composting is conducted in accordance with best management practices for livestock composting adopted by the Secretary of Food and Agriculture, as specified.

Vote: majority Appropriation: no Fiscal Committee: yes Local Program: no

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1. This act shall be known, and may be cited, as the Caring About The Terrain, Livestock, and Ecosystems (C.A.T.T.L.E) Act.

SEC. 2. Section 19348.2 is added to the Food and Agricultural Code, to read:

19348.2. (a) Notwithstanding Section 19348 and regulations adopted by the Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery pursuant to Section 43020 of the Public Resources Code, including, but not limited to, Section 17855.2 of Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations, any part of a livestock carcass resulting from a routine livestock mortality event or on-farm processing may be composted if all of the following requirements are met:

(1) The composting of the carcass is conducted in accordance with best management practices for livestock composting adopted by the secretary in collaboration with the Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery and the State Water Resources Control Board. The best management practices shall include, but not be limited to, all of the following specifications:

(A) Protection protocols for groundwater.

(B) Protection of public health and food supply.

(C) Proper management of compost piles.

(D) Collaboration procedures with local enforcement agencies.

(E) Enforcement and penalties for failing to follow the best management practices.

(2) The total amount of composting material onsite at any one time does not exceed 100 cubic yards, inclusive of livestock carcasses.

(3) All composting material, including livestock carcasses, comes from an agricultural site or sites owned or leased by the owner of the livestock carcasses.

(4) The composting activity occurs on an agricultural site owned or leased by the owner of the livestock carcasses. If the activity occurs on an agricultural site owned or leased by the owner that is not the site where the carcasses were generated:

(A) The activity shall occur in the county in which the carcass was generated or within an adjacent county.

(B) The transport of the carcasses shall comply with all applicable state and local laws and regulations.

(5) After the composting material is converted into cured compost, the cured compost is applied to an agricultural site owned or leased by the owner of the livestock carcasses that produced the cured compost and in compliance with the best management practices adopted pursuant to paragraph (1).

(6) The operator of the composting operation notifies the applicable local enforcement agency and the regional water quality control board of the facility within 30 days of commencing operation, including the location and operator contact information.

(b) For purposes of this section, the following definitions apply:

(1) "Livestock" means any mammalian animal described in Section 19201.

(2) "On-farm processing" means the slaughter of the livestock under circumstances authorized by subdivision (c) of Section 19020.

(3) "Routine livestock mortality event" means the death of the livestock from a natural cause. "Routine livestock mortality event" does not include any of the following:

(A) The death of the livestock due to being euthanized using barbiturates.

(B) The death of the livestock from a disease listed on the department's List of Reportable Conditions for Animals and Animal Products published pursuant to Section 9101.

(C) The death of the livestock in a location that is under a quarantine imposed pursuant to Section 9562.