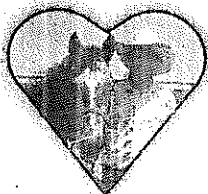




Hey Neighbor



# For The Love Of Horses

By Frank J. Buchman

## Disposing Of Deceased Horses Can Be A Complicated Matter

No horse owner really wants to discuss the subject.

As morbid as it might seem, the death of a horse is a part of real life.

What to do with that deceased horse can be a complicated procedure.

"There are four legal methods for disposing of a dead horse," according to George Teagarden, head of the Kansas Animal Health Department.

"These include burial, incineration, rendering and composting," he said.

Assistance in euthanizing a horse and taking care of the carcass can also, in certain situations, be provided by the K-State College Of Veterinary Medicine.

Many farms have a place, commonly referred to as "the bone pile," where carcasses are taken to decay naturally. "That is illegal. Any person dumping a dead horse on their property is subject to a fine," Teagarden clarified.

According to state statute 47-1219: "Any person

or persons who puts any dead animal or any part thereof into any well, spring, brook, branch, river, creek, pond, road, street, alley, lane, lot, field, meadow or common shall be deemed guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction, thereof shall be fined."

Additionally, "Every 24 hours the owners shall permit the same to remain thereafter shall be deemed an additional offense."

Local law enforcement officials are called upon to enforce these regulations, if

there is a report of such an offense, Teagarden recognized.

Burial is preferred by some as an appropriate way to dispose of a horse that has been a part of the family, so to speak, having been a top riding horse, breeding animal or pet. Many horses are buried on the ranches they served.

The gray Quarter Horse stallion, Jackie Bee, owned by Duane Walker of Canton, is buried in the area that served as his pen for many years. Just a few yards from the Walker home, a

grove of cedars has been planted behind the large monument for the leading sire of top Quarter Horses.

Of course, burial does require a large grave site. "A horse must be buried at least three feet deep, to prevent intrusion of varmints to the grave," Teagarden pointed out.

Burial should not be in a ditch or waterway. "The water would just wash away the soil," he added.

Incineration of a horse is an option, but is difficult. "It is very hard to do. A lot of

fuel would be required," Teagarden admitted.

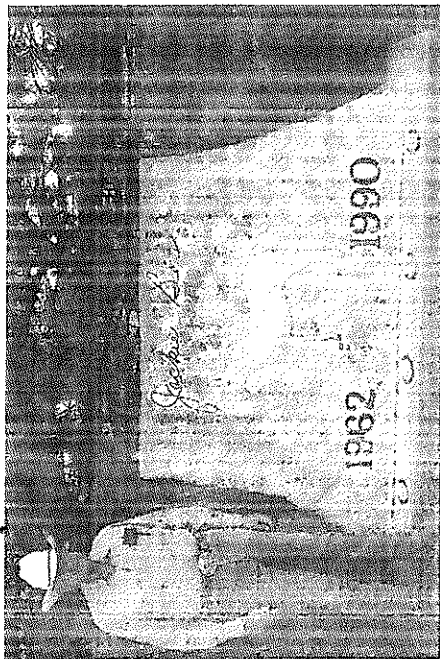
"There would be a tremendous amount of odor and smoke. The Bureau of Air Quality control would probably not permit it due to the impossibility of controlling the smoke," alerted Ken Powell at the Kansas Department of Health and Environment.

A commercial incinerator is available at Ashgrove Cement in Chanute, but the animal would have to be cut into pieces that would fit into a feed or bucket. This

would be possible in case of a diseased animal, but it is not likely to be feasible in most situations," Powell admitted.

In years gone by, it was not uncommon to call a rendering company to pick up a dead horse at no charge, Teagarden noted. "That has changed and now it is sometimes difficult to find a rendering service," he added.

National B products at Seneca has been taken over by Darling International, a rendering company with 30 operations throughout the



Burial is an often preferred method of handling a deceased horse who has been an important part of a ranch or family. Duane Walker, Canton, buried his gray Quarter Horse Jackie Bee in the pen that the stallion lived in for many years. Just a few yards from the Walker home, a monument marks the grave for this leading Quarter Horse sire.

Midwest, according to Mike Musgrave, vice president for Omaha operations. Seneca is still a reload station, and the actual rendering is done in Kansas City or Wichita.

Horses are not a prime commodity, Musgrave explained. "Their bodies are not worth anything and the value of the oil and meat and bone meal that can be derived from a carcass is very low."

While horses were once used in pet foods and other products, that is no longer the case, Musgrave added. Due to the low value of horse carcasses, increased environmental regulations and fuel costs, scabbers it's difficult for us to even have a break even," he noted.

Consequently a fee is charged for picking up the carcasses. "It depends on

the location, but cost can range from \$90 to over \$200," Musgrave commented.

Composting is an increasingly preferred method of disposing of a carcass. "It is really a natural, environmentally sound process," Powell confirmed.

A somewhat simple composting procedure was described by Powell. "A 24-to-30-inch base of sawdust, or woodchips, is required, and it should be watered down before the dead animal is placed. Another 24 inches of wetted sawdust must be put over and on all sides of the carcass," he detailed.

The pile should be turned in seven months and rewet at that time. "After 12 to 14 months, the carcass

will be decomposed, and the compost can be spread over a field," Powell insisted. Some bones that might remain will be crushed upon spreading, he added. Information about composting is available from Powell at 785-296-1121.

If a horse must be euthanized, the K-State College of Veterinary Medicine will cooperate with the owner to make the procedure less painful for them, according to Dr. Elizabeth Davis, KSU head of equine medicine and surgery. "We will handle the procedures for the owner and dispose of the horse. We always keep a piece of mane and tail, make a clay imprint of the foot and send them along with a sympathy card to the owner," Davis said.

## Disposing Of Deceased Horses Can Be A Complicated Matter

No horse owner really wants to discuss the subject.

As morbid as it might seem, the death of a horse is a part of real life.

What to do with that deceased horse can be a complicated procedure.

"There are four legal methods for disposing of a dead horse," according to George Teagarden, head of the Kansas Animal Health Department.

"These include burial, incineration, rendering and composting," he said.

Assistance in euthanizing a horse and taking care of the carcass can also, in certain situations, be provided by the K-State College Of Veterinary Medicine.

Many farms have a place, commonly referred to as "the bone pile," where carcasses are taken to decay naturally. "That is illegal. Any person dumping a dead horse on their property is subject to a fine," Teagarden clarified.

According to state statute 47-1219: "Any person or persons who puts any dead animal or any part thereof into any well, spring, brook, branch, river, creek, pond, road, street, alley, lane, lot, field, meadow or common shall be deemed guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction, thereof shall be fined."

Additionally, "Every 24 hours, the owners shall permit the same to remain thereafter shall be deemed an additional offense."

Local law enforcement officials are called upon to enforce these regulations, if there is a report of such an offense, Teagarden recognized.

Burial is preferred by some as an appropriate way to dispose of a horse that has been a part of the family, so to speak, having been a top riding horse, breeding animal or pet. Many horses are buried on the ranches they served.

The gray Quarter Horse stallion, Jackie Bee, owned by Duane Walker of Canton, is buried in the area that served as his pen for many years. Just a few yards from the Walker home, a grove of cedars has been planted behind the large monument for the leading sire of top Quarter Horses.

Of course, burial does require a large grave site. "A horse must be buried at least three feet deep, to prevent intrusion of varmints to the grave," Teagarden pointed out.

Burial should not be in a ditch or waterway. "The water would just wash away the soil," he added.

Incineration of a horse is an option, but is difficult. "It is very hard to do. A lot of fuel would be required," Teagarden admitted.

"There would be a tremendous amount of odor and smoke. The Bureau of Air Quality control would probably not permit it due to the impossibility of controlling the smoke," alerted Ken Powell at the Kansas Department of Health and Environment.

A commercial incinerator is available at Ashgrove Cement in Chanute, but the animal would have to be cut into pieces that would fit into a 5-gallon bucket. "This would be possible in case of a diseased animal, but it is not likely to be feasible in most situations," Powell admitted.

In years gone by, it was not uncommon to call a rendering company to pick up a dead horse at no charge, Teagarden noted. "That has changed, and now it is sometimes difficult to find a rendering service," he added.

National Byproducts at Seneca has been taken over by Darling International, a rendering company with 30 operations throughout the Midwest, according to Mike Musgrave, vice president for Omaha operations. Seneca is still a reload station, and the actual rendering is done in Kansas City or Wichita.

"Horses are not a prime commodity," Musgrave explained. "Their hides are not worth anything, and the value of the oil and meat and bone meal that can be derived from a carcass is very low."

While horses were once used in pet foods and other products, that is no longer the case, Musgrave added. "Due to the low value of horse carcasses, increased environmental regulations and fuel costs, sometimes it's difficult for us to even have a break even," he related.

Consequently a fee is charged for picking up the carcasses. "It depends on the location, but cost can range from \$90 to over \$200," Musgrave commented.

Composting is an increasingly preferred method of disposing of a carcass. "It is really a natural, environmentally sound process," Powell confirmed.

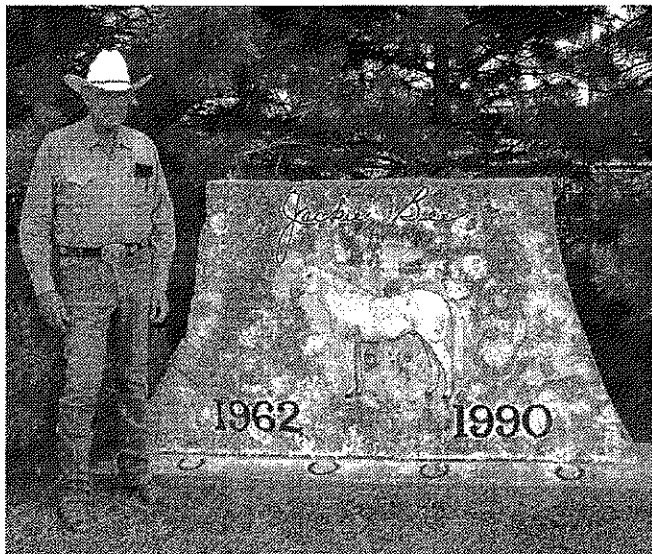
A somewhat-simple composting procedure was described by Powell. "A 24-to-30-inch base of sawdust, or woodchips, is required, and it should be watered down before the dead animal is placed. Another 24-inches of wetted sawdust must be put over and on all sides of the carcass," he detailed.

The pile should be turned in seven months and rewet at that time. "After 12 to 14 months, the carcass will be decomposed, and the compost can be spread over a field," Powell insisted.

Some bones that might remain will be crushed upon spreading, he added. Information about composting is available from Powell at 785-296-1121.

If a horse must be euthanized, the K-State College of Veterinary Medicine will cooperate with the owner to make the procedure less painful for them, according to Dr. Elizabeth Davis, KSU head of equine medicine and surgery.

"We will handle the procedures for the owner and dispose of the horse. We always keep a piece of mane and tail, make a clay imprint of the foot and send them along with a sympathy card to the owner," Davis said.



Burial is an often preferred method of handling a deceased horse who has been an important part of a ranch or family. Duane Walker, Canton, buried his gray Quarter Horse Jackie Bee in the pen that the stallion lived in for many years. Just a few yards from the Walker home, a monument marks the grave for the leading Quarter Horse sire.