

## **Dead Bird Composting Facility 318-1**

### **DEAD BIRD COMPOSTING FACILITY (CODE 318)**

#### **DESCRIPTION**

A Dead Bird Composting Facility (DBCF), for the purposes of the MACS Program, is a roofed structure designed for the composting of the normal daily accumulation of dead birds from a poultry growing or breeding operation.

#### **PURPOSE**

The practice is intended to eliminate the on-site burial of large numbers of carcasses as the principal disposal method of a poultry operation, thus reducing the potential for groundwater contamination. When properly managed, composting greatly reduces the volume of carcasses, kills most pathogens, prevents odors, and produces a stable, odorless, humus-like material which is useful as a fertilizer substitute and a soil amendment.

#### **CONDITION**

This practice applies where: (1) Composting is needed to treat and manage waste organic material; (2) Adequate area is available for installation; (3) Foundation materials are sufficiently stable; (4) Sufficient cropland is available for proper compost utilization; and (5) State and local laws allow composting of animal carcasses.

#### **POLICIES**

1. The applicant must be a poultry producer and the composter must be installed on the same farm parcel as where the dead birds are generated.
2. A DBCF must be built on the property where poultry is being produced or raised in sufficient numbers. The minimum flock size on the property must be equal to 15,000 broilers, 15,000 roasters or 4,400 layers. Cost-share is only available for the normal on-farm flock size. For capacities higher than justified by the existing flock, a Certification of Imminent Start-up or Expansion of a Poultry Growing Operation must be submitted with the MACS Water Quality Project Form. The composter capacity will be based on NRCS standards for normal mortality rates of the particular type of flock (as opposed to catastrophic die-offs). Any additional composting capacity will be built entirely at the owner's expense.
3. Only poultry from the farm on which the structure is located may be composted in the DBCF. (Exceptions to these provisions may be made by the Department on a case-by-case basis. Questions of biosecurity and operating efficiency will be considered.)

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4. When a *new* PWSS and composter are to be built at the same time with MACS funds, the composter must be freestanding or attached to the outside of the PWSS. If the farmer wishes to build an inside composter when building a new PWSS, he or she will absorb *all* the cost of the extra bays that will be required.
5. If the applicant has previously received a MACS grant for a PWSS, he/she may be eligible for an inside composter provided the following criteria are met:
  - a. Sufficient excess floor space is available in the PWSS. Sufficient space would be provided in a PWSS that was used at 30 - 69% of its total capacity. A PWSS storing greater than 69% of its capacity would not be eligible for an inside composter due to inadequate space. An applicant with a PWSS used at less than 30% capacity may be subject to probation, and would be ineligible for a MACS grant at this time.
  - b. A minimum of four bays are required for any inside composter. Four bays can accommodate a 2-bin or 4-bin composter efficiently. If a 4-bin composter is needed, two bins are to be placed on one wall and the other two bins on the opposite wall of the PWSS.
6. If the applicant has previously received a MACS grant for a PWSS and/or DBCF on this farm or any other farm and demonstrates the need for an additional composter, the Department must determine whether or not the applicant's use of the PWSS (or each of the PWSS's) has met and satisfied all applicable MACS Program requirements. To assist in making this determination, the SCDs shall provide the following information:
  - a. A written statement to the Department indicating the applicant meets all the eligibility requirements and summarizing the District's observations regarding the applicant's proper or improper use of the previously cost-shared PWSS(s). The SCD must submit this information on a current On-Farm Status Review(s).
  - b. If the applicant has not followed the guidelines for the operation and maintenance of the PWSS, the Department will deny the funding request for the composter. In such cases, once the applicant has demonstrated full compliance with the operation and maintenance requirements for the PWSS for at least 18 months, the Department may again consider a request for a MACS grant for a composter.
7. Mini-composters (movable, temporary composters lacking a permanent base and wall) are *not* eligible for cost-share assistance.
8. The applicant agrees to use the composting structure *only* for the treatment and containment of carcasses, other composting ingredients, and the mobile farm equipment actually needed for the composting operation.

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9. The applicant must have an available tractor in good working condition and equipped with a front-end loader or skid loader that will be adequate to load and empty the composting area.
10. The applicant agrees to implement and maintain a current Waste Management System Plan (according to NRCS Standards and Specifications) prepared by the District and signed by the District Conservationist and the applicant/operator. This must address all poultry wastes generated on the farm. The WMSP must be farm specific and agreed to by the applicant before funding can be approved for the proposed composter.
11. A current Nutrient Management Plan (NMP) prepared by a certified nutrient management consultant must accompany the signed MACS Claim for Payment. This plan is to address all poultry wastes generated on the farm. The safe utilization of stabilized carcass compost shall be addressed in the NMP for the farm. The plan must be prepared for the specific farm and signed to by the applicant. Before the CFP is signed by the MACS Administrator, the plan must be reviewed and approved by the Nutrient Management Program. The NMP must comply with the Maryland Nutrient Management Regulations, COMAR 15.20.08.
12. Applicants are required to keep their WMSP and NMP updated and current throughout the maintenance life of any animal waste treatment or containment project. These updates are the responsibility of the applicant and landowners, and the District and/or nutrient management consultant provides assistance. The District is responsible to verify the applicant has a current NMP and WMSP.
13. The applicant must agree to receive formal training in the proper operation of the composting facility from the CES. If someone other than the applicant will be operating the composter then that designated operator must receive the training. The applicant must sign the Dead Bird Composting Facility Training Certification (Section III). The CES must certify to the Department that the applicant or designated operator has received the standard composter training before the applicant's MACS Claim for Payment can be approved. If a disease outbreak causes training to be suspended, the Department will process the applicant's Claim for Payment without certification of training with the understanding that the applicant will take the required class as soon as training resumes.
14. Except with regard to setbacks, NRCS Standards and Specifications for Dead Bird Composting Facilities (Code 316-I) shall be followed when applying this practice. MACS requires siting of waste storage structures to be a minimum of 100 feet from streams, drainage ditches and other surface waters, wells, and sink holes. Exceptions may be allowed for constraints posed by the site and existing infrastructure. No exceptions will be made for new operations. Expansions will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Justification identifying protective measures to maintain water quality must be included with the application.

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15. The composting facility must be properly maintained and operated for a minimum of fifteen (15) years. The applicant agrees to provide all equipment, materials and labor needed to meet this requirement.

### TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS

1. A proposed DBCF **must** be one of the designs approved by the Maryland NRCS State Office in order to receive MACS funding. The facility must be built according to the design based on the normal flock size of the farm. If the farmer disagrees with the composter size recommendation that is based on the technical information available, then he/she may wish to construct a composter using alternative funding. ***It is paramount that MACS grant funding be used in accordance with existing technical guidance available from NRCS.***
2. NRCS standard composter designs include a roofed freestanding structure, a roofed design attached outside a PWSS, and an unroofed composter built inside a PWSS. Designs have been approved for a timber frame structure as well as a steel framed structure.
3. The structure must be built according to the approved NRCS design, and no alteration or attachment to the composting structure is allowed, unless approved by both the NRCS and MDA. ***If approved, attachments to the structure (inside or outside) are at the expense of the applicant.***
4. The composting operation must be carried out properly and consistently with the detailed technical instructions provided by the CES and the NRCS.

### COST-SHARE RATE

The State cost-share payment will not exceed 87.5% of the total eligible cost, not to exceed the cumulative maximum allowed for animal waste treatment or containment BMPs of \$150,000 per farm.

The maximum MACS Program eligible costs for bin composters are as follows:

2-bin inside (roofless)	\$2,300
4-bin inside (roofless)	\$3,300
6-bin inside (roofless)	\$4,300
2-bin outside (any approved type)	\$4,500
4-bin outside (any approved type)	\$6,000
6-bin outside (any approved type)	\$8,000
8-bin outside (any approved type)	\$10,000
10-bin outside (any approved type)	\$12,000
12-bin outside (any approved type)	\$14,000

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The maximum MACS Program eligible costs for channel composters are as follows (the rate for each additional 8' length after the first 16' length is \$1,650, if between 16' length increments):

16' long structure	\$5,600
(8' length increment cost	\$1,650)
32' long structure	\$8,600
48' long structure	\$11,600
64' long structure	\$14,600

The maximum eligible costs listed above are for stand-alone and attached composters, **regardless** of design selected. A MACS grant payment will be based on 87.5% of these amounts or of the actual construction costs, whichever is lower.

### ATTACHMENTS

***Applicant(s) with an outstanding Unsatisfactory On-Farm Status Review of BMP Maintenance and Use of previous project(s) may be ineligible for further MACS Cost-Share funding. When a previous project expires with outstanding unsatisfactory status, the applicant is ineligible for any future MACS funding.***

1. A copy of a recorded deed(s) for the parcel(s) for the location of the BMP. If the current, appropriate deed is already on file in the MACS Office, then the record both the Agreement # of the file where the deed is kept and the liber/folio numbers under the General Comments section of the Application.
2. A copy of the Real Property Data Search page (from the Maryland Department of Assessments and Taxation's website) indicating the Maryland Property View Account ID Number and owner information.
3. Aerial photograph indicating the property lines and existing and proposed BMPs.
4. A plan view sketch graphically demonstrating the layout and details of the proposed BMP including location of existing/proposed structures and landscape features including distance(s) (in feet) to streams and drainage ditches.
5. A current farm-specific Waste Management System Plan which includes information on the situation, problem, geographic area, NMP, system components, component details, waste utilization, installation timetable, structure operation and maintenance must accompany the MACS Water Quality Project Form. This document must be signed by the District Conservationist and the applicant and/or operator.
6. If an applicant and/or landowner applying for a DBCF has already received MACS funding for a PWSS(s) or another DBCF, then an On-Farm Status Review form of each of the PWSSs and/or DBCFs is to be sent with the MACS Water Quality Project Form.

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7. Nutrient Management Plan Certification form, if applicable. To be used for Imminent Start-up or Expansion Operations only.
8. Certification of Imminent Start-up or Expansion of a Poultry Growing Operation if applicable.
9. A current, approved Nutrient Management Plan is required on file in MACS before the Claim for Payment can be approved.
10. If the individual who is going to manage the composting facility is not the applicant, a Dead Bird Composting Facility Training Certification form must be signed by the cost-share applicant verifying certification of the designated operator.
11. Certification from the Cooperative Extension Service that the applicant or designated operator has attended the Composter Training Session in Princess Anne. The applicant must sign the Dead Bird Composting Facility Training Certification (Section III).
12. This must be received by the MDA before the applicant's MACS Claim for Payment can be approved. If disease outbreak causes training to be suspended, the Department will process the applicant's Claim for Payment without certification of training with the understanding that the applicant will take the required training class as soon as they resume.