



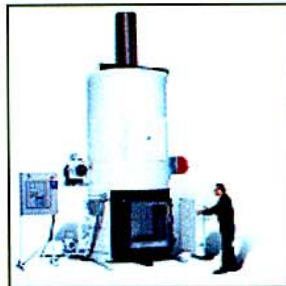
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Environmentally responsible incinerators will deal with dead stock



BURLINGTON, ON. – When fuel costs eventually drop, commercial farmers could start eyeing vastly improved cremation technology as a way of dealing with dead stock. That will be good news for Steve Meldrum, CEO of Eco Waste Solutions Inc., a company that recently took part in a cooperative program with the Ontario Ministries of Agriculture and Food and

Environment, the University of Guelph and Environment Canada. The focus was dealing with emissions for on-farm incinerators.

"The test was 10 days at the Arkell Research Station at the University of Guelph," he said. "We used our CleanAire Model (CA-600) with poultry and swine as dead stock types. The targeted pollutants included several particulates, acid gases, metals and dioxins and the results were very encouraging.

"The dioxin limit that has been set here is one of the lowest in the world. The question was whether the technology could work effectively within the set of limits to be enforced by 2006. We were pleased to see the results were as little as .0001 per cent of allowable limits. Our ash results were also much lower than the regulated Ontario limits."

As for benefits to the agricultural community, Meldrum said the system is more manageable for the producer.

"You can take care of it yourself, without having to be reliant upon a hauler," he said. "There will be also be more of a (government) crackdown in terms of regulations on the transportation of hazardous materials. While that hasn't yet extended to farm animals, the problems with avian flu, mad cow and other diseases will eventually lead to more of a regulatory focus in this area."

Barry Hunter, a cash cropper, head of the Ontario Pet Cremation Services and owner of two Eco Waste Solutions incineration units in the Dorchester area, is sold on the new technology.

"The two units we've got do an excellent job," he said. "I waited for a long time to replace our older units. I was in the dead stock business for more than 25 years, up to about five years ago and we did some cremation. But these units are totally computerized and monitored so it's a very different situation. These are not the old-fashioned barrel shaped incinerators that some farmers still use.

"We had one unit running for about three months and some didn't even know it. There is no smell and no odour. We can take a 1,200-pound horse down to about five per cent; reduce it to about 60 pounds of ash, totally sterilized. With 12 hours of cremation and another 12 to cool the units down, it is very efficient."

Hunter has incinerated research animals, including pigs, to ensure that any drugs tested in their systems do not make their way back into the food chain. His company has also disposed of horses – many of them boarded on farms by their owners.

The one drawback keeping from commercial farmers from getting involved on a large scale is the rising cost of fuels, he says.

"This is an excellent system, efficient, reliable and clean," Hunter said. "But with the way the agricultural industry is today, the cost of fuel has to come down so this won't be such a prohibitive venture. When the price comes down, it should be very appealing to farmers."

Article written by Geoff Dale

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