

Pig Farmers Will Start Culling Herds Due to Lack of Processing Plants

President Trump's recent executive order to keep meat and poultry processing plants open during the COVID-19 pandemic might not be enough to keep farmers from culling their herds. Chairman of the House Committee on Agriculture Collin Peterson, D-Minnesota, told a CNN reporter, Manu Raju, that farmers will have to kill 60,000 to 70,000 pigs a day due to the lack of processing plants.

I think you are going to see some grocery stores have shortages of pork next week...(if shutdowns continue) you can end up running out of pork completely."

Collin Peterson, House Agriculture Chairman

While consumers will be dealing with pork shortages, farmers will have to find a way to dispose of the hogs. There are serious environmental and health implications for each of the disposal methods available to farmers, which include burning, burying, and composting.

Recommended: *How to Eliminate IBS, IBD, Leaky Gut*

Burning the pig carcasses creates air pollution. After a 2001 Foot and Mouth outbreak in the U.K. necessitated the slaughter of 6.5 million animals, researchers calculated that every burned pig carcass generated around three pounds of particulate matter. Burial is the cheapest option, but the carcasses release liquid that leaches into the water supply. Nitrates are particularly toxic to infants at high levels. Composting is the most eco-friendly method of the three, but it requires resources that farmers may not be able to easily locate. Management of the composting will require a subject

expert and enough carbon-rich material like sawdust or leaves.

If the food supply chain breaks down, the dichotomy will be painful. Farmers will continue to produce food, but without a way to process it, consumers will be unable to purchase it.

Sources

- *As slaughterhouses close, farmers may have to cull thousands of hogs a day. Those carcasses need to go somewhere—and there are no good options – The Counter*
- *Trump is keeping meatpacking plants open – but employees are scared to show up for work – Vox*