

EMERGENCY CHECKLIST

Livestock emergency management plan

Use this checklist to prepare and protect your animals during dangerous weather.

1. Scout your property and barn structures.

Where are your animals safest? Check the condition of the barn, including the roof. If the barn is not safe, consider open fields, but check for the location of power lines and number of trees. Further, check your fence rows for weak areas or if trees can fall on your fence line, allowing animals to escape. Take steps to secure your fence if needed. Remove any poisonous plants and trees. Trees that have fallen or flooded areas may force animals to nibble on other forages they may not normally eat that may be toxic to them.

2. Pick up debris and limbs from pastures and around home. Objects such as tree limbs and jumps can become flying objects and injure animals.

3. Place your livestock hurricane kits and plans in a safe and visible location.

4. Have a written plan in place, including an evacuation plan and rescue plan.

5. Place your evacuation kit and first-aid kit in a bag in a safe location.

6. Know food and water requirements for livestock.

7. Place your emergency barn kit in a secure area before the storm. This kit may include a chainsaw, fuel, chain lubricant, saw, hammers, nails, screws, duct tape, screwdrivers, fencing materials, tarps, flashlights, batteries, and ladder.

8. Create an animal identification system for your livestock.

9. Have a list of emergency contacts.

10. Create a neighborhood small farm disaster committee. You can assist your community in developing and improving community disaster plans for the care of animals by forming a committee. This committee can serve to determine what equipment and resources are available from other farmers in your area and learn who has skills to offer in what areas.

This type of committee can be a valuable tool to help the small farmers deal with hurricane issues and determine important areas of need to provide care for livestock and recovery. The committee should consist of local farmers; veterinarians; animal industry representatives, including feed stores; and county representatives.

11. Be ready after the storm. See to your animals, keep them as calm as possible and allow your animals to rest and sleep. Check for live wires and survey the property and barn to identify sharp and damaged objects, dangerous wildlife, contaminated water, damaged fences and other hazards. Release livestock in a safe and dry place. Watch for fire ants and other dangerous insects—they will look for dry places to nest. If you've lost animals, post notices locally and contact code enforcement and animal control. If you have an emergency, put out a "livestock need assistance" flag at the end of your driveway.