

Preparing for Disaster - Evacuation and Survival Tips

Texas is vulnerable to a number of disasters from hurricanes and wildfires to floods and snow storms. Any of these disasters can wreak havoc on the livelihood of farmers and ranchers.



What's at stake in Texas? Texas is home to nearly 300,000 farms and ranches. Livestock production is a huge portion of the economy; not being prepared for a disaster can be costly to both lives and property.

Texas Livestock Production Ranks in the U.S.

#1 Cattle #1 Sheep & Goats #1 Equine
#6 Poultry #7 Dairy #15 Swine

Planning for disasters or emergency situations is imperative. Protect livestock by having a plan of action.

1. Shelter in place: In some disasters, such as in a hurricane, there might be enough advance warning to evacuate with livestock. In other situations such as wildfires, there may not be enough time to access animals for evacuation. If you are unable to evacuate with your livestock in any disaster situation, open gates, stalls and pens to allow animals a chance to find safer ground. Remember that disasters often displace animals left behind so you should have a way to identify your animal. Ear tags, microchips, brands, contact information attached to halters, and pictures of you with your animal are good ways to prove ownership after a disaster.

2. Evacuation: In the event you choose to evacuate with your livestock, you should locate a safe place out of the affected area, either with family, friends, or a shelter location. Determine an evacuation route as well as alternate routes in case they are needed, and ensure your vehicle and trailer are in acceptable condition for a long distance trip. Hurricane warnings are often issued 72 to 120 hours prior to landfall so plan to leave early to avoid heavy traffic while towing a trailer. Bring extra fuel and your livestock disaster kit (detailed below). Remember to post your evacuation plans and contact information in several places around your home and barns. Posting this information allows anyone who checks your property, such as search and rescue teams, to know that you have evacuated and are safe.

3. Gather livestock disaster supplies: In addition to your personal disaster kit, put together supplies that may be needed for your livestock. A livestock disaster kit may include:

- A waterproof container in which to store feed and equipment
- A one week supply of feed (grain and hay)
- A one week supply of water
- Copies of veterinary records, breed registry and any paperwork proving ownership
- An emergency contact list
- First aid kit
- Fly and mosquito spray
- Detailed diet and medication instructions
- Hoof knife, nippers, pick and rasp
- Leather or cotton halters and lead
- Maps of local area with possible evacuation routes

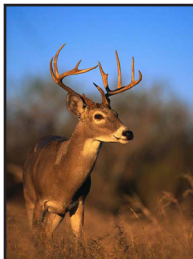
After the Disaster

After a disaster, debris, snakes and other pests, lack of edible forage, and contaminated water may pose a threat to livestock. Keep animals confined to smaller, secure pastures as familiar scents and landmarks may be absent or altered. Be aware that road conditions may keep you from re-entering the affected area for some time as well as prevent help from reaching you. Stay informed through your local radio, television and internet resources. Follow all directions provided by local, state and or federal emergency responders. Because power outages may not be remedied for days after a disaster, installing a generator and keeping a one week supply of fuel can help prevent production losses by allowing you to run the day to day operations of your farm or ranch until power can be restored.





Information provided by the
Texas Animal Health Commission
Austin, TX



Protecting Livestock when Disaster Strikes

www.tahc.texas.gov

Contact the
Texas Animal Health Commission
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