

## Create a livestock emergency plan now for less stress later

By Emma Feuz & Jake Hadfield

Natural disasters are hard to predict and can be scary for everyone involved. It can be easy to forget important things in the chaos of a disaster. To help ease some of that stress, the USDA recommends making a plan for livestock in case of a natural disaster. The few steps of planning that it takes can make a big difference in the end.

The precautions taken depend largely on the size and the amount of livestock on the property. The extremeness of the weather also must be taken into account on a case by case basis, however, providing the basics can be a good place to start.

Get a preparedness kit together. Make sure to include, feed, water, medications, documents, and any other necessary supplies. It's also a good idea to check the kit regularly and update its contents when needed.

Understand the disasters that are most likely to occur in your area, and know at what point during an emergency it will be necessary for you to evacuate. Make a plan for where you will go and how you will transport your livestock. Designate someone to take care of all of this in the event you are not home.

Try to assess the safety of your property regularly. Make sure you have a strong shelter that can withstand the elements. Be sure to provide enough feed and water that the animals will be set for a few days if you can't reach them. Warm bedding for every animal is a necessity during the winter season, but cooling options should also be accounted for in case of excessive heat.

Make sure that all your livestock have some form of identification. This can be helpful in keeping all your livestock together during the chaos of locating and transporting them during a disaster.

Stop by the Utah State University Extension office or call at (435) 623-3450 if you have any more questions regarding livestock emergency preparedness planning.

### Reference:

2016. Do you have a plan for your livestock should disaster strike. United States Department of Agriculture, <https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/usda-livestock-preparedness-fact-sheet.pdf>