



NEWS RELEASE

Texas Animal Health Commission
"Serving Texas Animal Agriculture Since 1893"
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Hurricane Season Kicks off June 1: TAHC Advises Livestock and Pet Owners to Prepare Early

AUSTIN - The Texas Animal Health Commission (TAHC) reminds Texans that hurricane season begins June 1 and continues through Nov. 30. The TAHC advises Texas livestock and pet owners to begin preparing now for any possible storms.

The TAHC is the state's lead agency for all animal issues in disasters, whether natural or man-made. Prior to a disease or disaster event, the TAHC coordinates planning and training activities at the local and state levels in conjunction with industry partners, other government agencies, and non-governmental organizations, to ensure the state's preparedness to protect the livestock and poultry industries, as well as household pets.

Animals are particularly vulnerable to the severe weather associated with tropical storms and hurricanes. Any tropical storm system can wreak havoc on the livelihood of farmers and ranchers. Proper planning for disasters, evacuations, or emergency situations is imperative.

Jeff Turner, TAHC Emergency Management Director stated, "Tropical storm systems present one of the most severe threats to animals and not just those along the coast. As these systems move inland, they bring high winds, torrential rains, and tornados." He added, "Planning for your animals is just as important as planning for your families and your businesses.

"Behind every animal disaster is a human disaster due to the special relationship people develop with their animals, whether they be livestock or pets," said Dr. T.R. Lansford, TAHC Assistant Executive Director over Emergency Management. TAHC staff continue to work with local animal issue committees to ensure they know about the special issues animals abandoned and/or injured during these storms will present to livestock producers and animal owners, responders, and the local veterinary community."

For more information on how to protect your livestock when a disaster occurs, read the TAHC's "Protecting Livestock When Disaster Strikes" brochure at http://www.tahc.state.tx.us/news/brochures/TAHCBrochure_EmergencyManagement.pdf. You

can also visit http://texasprepares.org/English/family_pets.shtml and <http://www.prep4agthreats.org/> .

During natural disaster responses, the TAHC assists local jurisdictions through the state emergency management system, conducting animal needs assessments, coordinating disposal activities, and addressing evacuation and sheltering issues through various resources and partnerships.

Founded in 1893, the Texas Animal Health Commission works to protect the health of all Texas livestock, including: cattle, swine, poultry, sheep, goats, equine animals, and exotic livestock.

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