



## On-Farm Emergency Preparedness Guide

In recent years, the Yukon experienced flooding, wildfires, landslides and earthquakes. These can be significantly damaging events. Would your farm be prepared to deal with such an emergency?

An emergency plan can be helpful for coping with unexpected events such as fires, wildfires, flooding or extreme weather but also for incidents of limited feed supply, a utility failure, transportation accidents or the serious illness or death of the main caretaker.

Being prepared can:

- help prevent some emergency situations from occurring,
- streamline your response efforts when disasters hit;
- mitigate an unexpected incident's impacts on human health, livestock health and welfare, and property and economic losses; and
- help orient emergency personnel deployed to your property to react quickly and efficiently.

This guide is to help livestock producers assess their farm's risks, prepare their property, plan a response and establish contacts to help during an emergency or disaster. Review the checklists below. It will help you to start thinking of what types of disasters or emergencies could impact your property and farming operations and how to start implementing prevention tactics and actions to keep you and your livestock safe.

### Step 1: Risk Assessment

What are the hazards that are most likely to occur and impact your farm? (Check all that apply.)

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Wildfire/forest fire  | <input type="checkbox"/> Structure fire                               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Flooding              | <input type="checkbox"/> Building/structure collapse                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Earthquake            | <input type="checkbox"/> Animal disease outbreak                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Heavy wind storm      | <input type="checkbox"/> Illness/injury to owner or primary caretaker |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Heavy rain storm      | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____                                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Winter storm/blizzard |   |

## Step 2: Preparedness

Review this checklist and implement the suggested actions to help prevent emergencies and mitigate the impacts of disasters.

### a. Owner preparedness:

- I have created an emergency preparedness plan. I have a digital and hard copies available to me. I have also shared a copy to my local fire department and with my emergency contact with signing authority
- I have digital and physical copies of my personal and important documentation (medications, allergies, financial number, insurance number) in the event that I need to evacuate.

### b. Seasonal preparedness

#### In the fall:

- Update your animals vaccinations.
- Test all hay for moisture and heating to ensure quality.
- Keep grass mowed and debris (including stored hay/straw or manure) away from building to prevent spontaneous fires or self-combustion.
- Ensure bedding and feed stockpiles are sufficient for the non-growing season.
- Avoid storing feedstuff (hay) and bedding (straw, shavings) in areas prone to flooding in the spring.

#### In the winter:

- Monitor all water heaters/ automatic waterers to ensure proper functioning.
- Monitor snow build-up on roof tops to prevent roof collapse.
- Ensure animals have adequate access to water, wind protection and bedding.
- Inspect all heat sources and wiring to make sure there is no damage.
- Avoid storing feedstuff (hay) and bedding (straw, shavings) inside or next to buildings/ facilities that house animals to prevent spontaneous fires or self-combustion. This includes manure piles.
- Mitigate spring flooding by not stock piling snow in valuable livestock locations such as unoccupied winter pastures or pens.
- Pile snow in areas better able to withstand high snow melt and risk of flood, such as sloped area leading to ditches, ponds, dugouts, etc..

**In the spring:**

- Inspect all fences for winter damage before releasing animals.
- Inspect buildings for winter damage including wiring and outlets.
- Monitor water levels around your property.
- Check your feed sources for mold and mildew.
- Update your animals on vaccinations.
- Clean out pens, barns, stalls, etc..
- Keep grass mowed, and debris (including stored hay/straw or manure) away from building to prevent spontaneous fires or self-combustion.

**In the summer:**

- Monitor your building/facilities for adequate ventilation to prevent heat stress.
- Monitor water levels around your property, including standing water for possible toxins.
- Maintain your farm equipment on a regular basis to prevent on site fires.
- Ensure your animals have adequate access to shade, and water to mitigate heat stress.
- Keep grass mowed, and debris (including stored hay/straw or manure) away from building to prevent spontaneous fires or self-combustion.
- Limit burning activities to windless days only.

**c. Situational preparedness****Wildfire/ forest fire:**

- Create a firebreak around property or most important property locations.
- Move combustible materials away from a fire danger zone to create a fire break and avoid spreading the fire (e.g.: move bale stacks away from tree line further into pasture).
- Install irrigation for structures on the property.

**Flooding:**

- Create dikes, barriers, ditches, and irrigation channels to help direct water away from important structures and livestock.
- Designate a run-off area where you will direct melt and rain water.
- Store/ move feed, chemicals, fuel, machinery and other electrical equipment off site or to higher ground.
- Anchor any item or structure that cannot be moved.
- Move animals to highest ground possible and ensure adequate food and water is available.

**Earthquake:**

- Secure buildings and water tanks to ensure their strength and stability to avoid falling.
- Ensure hazardous materials such as chemicals, fertilizers, or sharp implements are stored in a way to avoid causing harm to animals or humans should they fall.

**Heavy wind or rain storms:**

- Identify dead and unhealthy trees and remove from the property.
- Ensure roof tops and structures are properly maintained.
- Ensure shelter is available to all livestock and that the structures are reinforced and secure to avoid collapsing during a storm.
- Ensure animals receive adequate bedding and feed to last for 24 hours should a storm prevent additional chores.

**Winter storm/ blizzard:**

- Ensure animals have access to shelter/wind break.
- Ensure automatic waterers/ water heaters are in good operation.
- Ensure animals receive adequate bedding and feed to last for 24 hours should a storm prevent additional chores.

**Structure fire:**

- Avoid or do not allow smoking within farm buildings. Designate a gravel or water bucket for discarded cigarettes.
- Clear of clutter and debris around structures.
- Regularly inspect electrical outlets.
- Install heating systems in farm buildings so that bedding is not at risk of catching fire and the livestock are not able to tamper with heating source.
- Make ABC powder fire extinguishers available in all structures.

**Building/ structure collapse:**

- Maintain buildings for proper repair to avoid collapse.
- Remove livestock and other materials/ equipment if a building is unstable.
- Destroy and remove buildings deemed hazardous or unreliable.

**Animal disease outbreak:**

- If you are required to depopulate, ensure you have the capabilities to do so.
- Have a protocol in place for proper disinfection.
- Have segregation pens available for sick livestock.
- Incorporate biosecurity measures in your farm operations to prevent spread of illness.
- Ensure animals are up to date on their vaccinations.

**Illness/injury to owner or primary caretaker:**

- I have someone in place with signing authority and is authorized to make decisions regarding the farm business should I become incapacitated or unavailable.
- My employees are trained and capable to maintain the daily work in my absence.
- I have sufficient backup feed should I fall ill or become injured.
- Myself and other employees or family are trained in First Aid and CPR.

**Step 3: Know your options**

An emergency or disaster can strike nearby and threaten your farm operations and property. Review the following options and consider making plans and improvements to your farming operation so that you are prepared when an emergency or disaster escalates. Of course, there are more options than presented below. This is meant to provoke ideas on how you would act as an emergency increasingly threatens your animals and property.

**Option 1: Keep animals on site.**

I am able to contain all my animals in buildings that provide sufficient protection.  
I have other structures in place to protect my animals from hazards.  
I have enough feed, water and bedding for my animals for a minimum 72-hour period.

**Option 2: Move animals to alternate location on the property.**

I have a location on my property that will keep animals safely away from hazard (i.e. higher ground in the event of flooding).

Describe in detail the alternate location on your property:

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I have sufficient support (available on short notice) to round-up and relocate my animals to this location in a timely manner.

I have access to feed, water and ample space to provide to my animals at this alternate site

I have enough feed, water and bedding for my animals for a minimum 72-hour period.

In these supplies, I have temporary panels/fencing to create pens, water troughs and buckets that I can use at the alternate location.

**Option 3: Relocate animals off site.**

I have identified and prearranged an off-farm location for my animals to evacuate in case of an emergency. This evacuation site is in a different location and would not be impacted by an emergency event that forces me to evacuate my property.

I have the means for transporting my animals to this location.

This off-farm location has feed, water and ample space available to comfortably accommodate all of my animals.

**Option 4: Euthanasia.**

Should an emergency situation create circumstances where animals are suffering from broken limbs or backs, extensive wounds or burns or require depopulation due to disease outbreak, I am prepared as a livestock owner to euthanize my animals and dispose of the deadstock appropriately during this emergency event.

I, and my staff, are experienced, confident and capable of performing euthanasia when necessary.

I have the equipment (e.g. gun, penetrating captive bolt) required to administer euthanasia when necessary.

## **Step 4: Resources**

### **Mental health recovery**

An emergency situation can have hidden impacts on the mental health and wellbeing of livestock owners, family, tenants and staff. People react differently to trauma through a wide range of physical and emotional responses.

Physical responses can include:

- fatigue;
- insomnia/ nightmares
- muscle tension;
- aches and pains; or
- loss of appetite.

Emotional response can include:

- anxiety;
- anger and mood swings;
- guilt and shame;
- sadness; or
- withdrawing from others.

If you, or someone you know, have experienced an emergency event and are exhibiting some of these reactions or symptoms, reach out to The Do More Agriculture Foundation at [domore.ag](http://domore.ag). The foundation is championing mental wellbeing for all Canadian producers.

### **Emergency planning and preparedness**

- Government of Yukon emergencies and safety information ([yukon.ca/en/emergencies-and-safety](http://yukon.ca/en/emergencies-and-safety))
- Government of Canada emergencies information ([canada.ca/en/services/policing/emergencies.html](http://canada.ca/en/services/policing/emergencies.html))

Information specific for farms and livestock:

- Government of Canada's Emergency Preparedness for Farm Animals ([getprepared.gc.ca/cnt/rsrscs/pblctns/frm-nmls/index-en.aspx](http://getprepared.gc.ca/cnt/rsrscs/pblctns/frm-nmls/index-en.aspx))
- Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada's Emergency Planning is for producers too ([agriculture.canada.ca/en/canadas-agriculture-sectors/animal-industry/agriculture-emergency-management/emergency-planning-producers-too](http://agriculture.canada.ca/en/canadas-agriculture-sectors/animal-industry/agriculture-emergency-management/emergency-planning-producers-too))
- Government of British Columbia's Emergency Response Planning (<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/industry/agriculture-seafood/business-market-development/emergency-management/emergency-response-planning>)

## **Contacts**

### **Agriculture Branch, Livestock Extension Services Unit**

Department of Energy, Mines and Resources

Government of Yukon

Phone: 867-667-5838 or toll free: 1-800-661-0408 (ask to be transferred)

Fax: 867-393-6222

Email: [agriculture-livestock@yukon.ca](mailto:agriculture-livestock@yukon.ca)

Website: [yukon.ca/support-agriculture](http://yukon.ca/support-agriculture)

Location: 300 Main Street, Suite 320, Elijah Smith Building in Whitehorse

Mail: PO Box 2703 (K-320A) Whitehorse, YT Y1A 2C6

### **Animal Health Unit**

Department of Environment

Government of Yukon

Phone: 867-667-5600 or toll free: 1-800-661-0408 (ask to be transferred)

Fax: 867-393-6263

Email: [animalhealth@yukon.ca](mailto:animalhealth@yukon.ca)

Website: [yukon.ca/support-agriculture](http://yukon.ca/support-agriculture)

Location: 10 Burns Road in Whitehorse

Mail: PO Box 2703 (V7) Whitehorse, YT Y1A 2C6

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