



## **Summary: Agency Support to the Texas Division of Emergency Management – External Affairs-Public Information**

**The Texas AgriLife Extension Service** is a state education agency that extends research-based knowledge to enhance the well-being and prosperity of Texans. Affiliated with The Texas A&M System, the agency serves as an outreach arm, employing a statewide network of professional educators, communicators and trained volunteers to serve every county in the state.

The Texas AgriLife Extension Service is a member of the State Emergency Management Council, based on mission-ready commitments primarily related to public outreach and communications during the emergency phases of preparedness, mitigation and recovery. During times of crisis, AgriLife Extension has the capacity to mobilize its headquarters operations center in College Station and redirect its statewide staff and resources to support TDEM Public Information as needed. These resources include more than 500 county Extension agents, jointly employed with County Commissioners Courts of Texas, and more than 150 Extension specialists and other professionals with expertise in various scientific, engineering, home, family, and social system fields of study. Some 88 of these specialists are members of nine Extension incident resource teams.

With regard to public information and education, AgriLife Extension's role is to support and assist the lead state agency, the Texas Division of Emergency Management (TDEM), in concert with other state and federal agencies and local governments. AgriLife Extension is prepared to act as follows to provide essential information and public education to rural and urban Texans, communities and businesses.

### **Public Information Resources:**

#### ***1. News and Public Affairs Division of Texas AgriLife Communications***

News and Public Affairs maintains long-standing relationships with urban and rural news media to deliver up-to-date information to the public during all stages of emergency management. News and Public Affairs will:

- Work directly with the PIO at TDEM and appropriate Joint Information Center during all phases of emergency management.
- Work with the Joint Information Center to provide up-to-date information to the public regarding preparedness, mitigation, response and recovery.
- Use its <http://agnews.tamu.edu> web capabilities to deliver news and educational material about emergency preparedness, mitigation, response and recovery.
- Facilitate the media's access to county Extension agents, Extension specialists, research and teaching faculty at Texas A&M University, and others who can provide expert information during emergencies.

2. ***Extension Disaster Education Network (Texas EDEN: <http://texashelp.tamu.edu> )***

Texas EDEN, a cooperative effort between Texas AgriLife Extension and the Texas Department of State Health Services, is dedicated to reducing the impact of disasters through public education. Texas EDEN will provide up-to-date educational materials to promote preparedness for and recovery from all types of disasters.

**Public Education Resources:**

1. ***Incident Resource Teams (IRT) - 88 Extension specialists serve as subject matter specialists on nine IRT teams***

AgriLife Extension's Incident Resource Teams are made up of specialists in various subject areas. These teams are organized to plan for and respond to eight general types of emergencies. Chairs and contact information for each of the IRTs are listed at the end of this document.

- Drought Team
- Wildfires Team
- Animal Issues Team
- Hazardous Agricultural Materials
- Food, Fiber and Forestry Biosecurity/Agroterrorism
- All Hazard Resource Team for Children, Youth and Families
- All Hazards Resource Team for Community Resources
- All Hazards Resource Team for Food Safety and Food Security
- Communications and Training Team

Extension specialists on Incident Resource Teams will:

- Develop educational publications to be disseminated by county Extension agents and the public during all phases of emergency management.
- In concert with the PIO at TDEM or JIC, serve as media spokespersons to relay pertinent information to the public regarding emergency preparedness, mitigation and recovery.
- Provide professional development for county Extension agents to equip them to respond to all types of hazards.
- Support county Extension agents with educational presentations to help the public understand all areas of emergency management.
- Promote mitigation demonstrations to reduce the impact of disasters.
- Represent the agency at the Joint Information Center.

2. ***Educational Publishing Division of Texas AgriLife Communications***

Educational Publishing supports programs of the Texas AgriLife Extension Service by producing educational materials used across the state. Educational Publishing will:

- Use its editorial and graphic design expertise to produce and distribute the educational publications written by Extension specialists serving on Incident Resource Teams.

- Maintain an up-to-date collection of disaster preparedness and recovery materials accessible at <http://texashelp.tamu.edu> so that county Extension agents, specialists, other educators and the public have constant access to vital information.

**2. *County Extension Agents***

The 500+ county Extension agents, who serve all 254 counties in Texas, will:

- Raise public awareness through local programming and contacts during preparation, mitigation, response and recovery. This includes, but is not limited to, the use of newsletters, news columns, radio, television and county AgriLife Extension Web sites.
- Provide technical expertise in relevant sciences, engineering, family and consumer sciences, and youth development during preparedness, mitigation and recovery.
- Disseminate research-based educational information during all phases of emergency management.
- Promote emergency preparedness through local educational programs.
- Make resources available (including personnel) to aid in all phases of emergency management.
- Serve at the Joint Information Center during crises.

**Contact Information for AgriLife Extension Specialists-Subject Matter Experts (SME) and Public Information Officers (PIOs)**

**[see next page]**

## Contact Information for AgriLife Extension Specialists-Subject Matter Experts (SME)

Incident Resource Team(IRT)	Co-chair & Department	Telephone	Email
<b>Drought IRT</b> (12 specialists)	<b>Travis Miller, PhD</b> Soil and Crop Sciences	979-845-4808	td-miller@tamu.edu
	<b>Steve Byrnes, PIO</b> AgriLife Communications	325-653-4576	s-byrns@tamu.edu
<b>Wildfires IRT</b> (8 specialists)	<b>Eric Taylor, PhD</b> Ecosystem Science & Mgmt	903-834-6191	eric-taylor@tamu.edu
	<b>Megan Dominguez</b> Ecosystem Science & Mgmt	361-265-9203	mkdominguez@ag.tamu.edu
	<b>Kay Ledbetter, PIO</b> AgriLife Communications	806-677-5600	skledbetter@ag.tamu.edu
<b>Animal Issues IRT</b> (19=4 specialists)	<b>Jason Cleere, PhD,</b> Animal Science	979-458-3304	jjcleere@ag.tamu.edu
	<b>Blair Fannin, PIO</b> AgriLife Communications	979-845-2259	b-fannin@tamu.edu
<b>Hazardous Agricultural Materials IRT</b> (6 specialists)	<b>Don Renchie, PhD</b> Ag & Environmental Safety	979-845-3849	d-renchie@tamu.edu
	<b>Kathleen Phillips, PIO</b> AgriLife Communications	979-845-2872	ka-phillips@tamu.edu
<b>Food, Fiber &amp; Forestry Biosecurity/Bioterrorism</b> (16 specialists)	<b>Mark McFarland, PhD</b> Soil & Crop Sciences	979-845-5366	ml-mcfarland@tamu.edu
	<b>Robert Burns, PIO</b> AgriLife Communications	903-834-6191	rd-burns@tamu.edu
<b>A11 Hazard Resource Teams</b> (20 specialists)  Food Safety and Security Dept. Nutrition and Food Sciences  Children Youth & Families Office of Family Development & Resource Management	<b>Mike Jackson, PIO</b> AgriLife Communications	972-952-9232	mcjackson@ag.tamu.edu
	<b>Jenna Anding, PhD</b> Nutrition and Food Science	979-847-9227	j-anding@tamu.edu
	<b>Joyce Cavanagh, PhD</b> Family Development and Resource Management	979-845-3859	jacavanagh@ag.tamu.edu
<b>Communication &amp; Training Team</b> (12 specialists)	<b>Jim Segers PhD</b> AgriLife Information Technology	979-845-9689	j-segers@tamu.edu
<b>Agency Liaison to Headquarters Operation Center</b>	<b>Joyce Cavanagh, PhD</b> Family Development and Resource Management	979-847-3859	jacavanagh@ag.tamu.edu
<b>Agency Liaison to State Operation Center</b>	<b>Andy Vestal, PhD</b> Homeland Security/ Emergency Management	979-862-3013 o 979-229-5710 c	t-vestal@tamu.edu

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