



Summary of Agency Support to Texas Animal Health Commission – Animal-Disease Issues

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 and trained volunteers to serve every county in the state.

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 preparedness, recovery, and mitigation phases of emergency management. 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 as needed. These 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 animal-related emergencies, AgriLife Extension's role is to support and assist the lead state agency, the Texas Animal Health Commission (TAHC), in the response operations in concert with other state and federal agencies and local governments. AgriLife Extension is prepared to act as follows, to provide essential information, public education and service to rural and urban Texans, communities, and businesses.

Texas AgriLife Extension Service supports TAHC during disaster incidents where animals are involved, such as hurricanes, drought, wildfires, severe storms, floods, and animal diseases. The agency accomplishes this by helping TAHC form local community Animal Issues Committees (AICs), partnering with TAHC in its field incident command post (ICP) for natural disasters involving animals, and supporting the State Foreign and Emerging Animal Disease (FEAD) Response Plan as a member of the FEAD ICP. Specifically AgriLife Extension accomplishes this by:

1:1 Providing representatives to work in the Joint Information Center (JIC) for a FEAD event, or to work with the TAHC Public Information Officer (PIO) during non-disease incidents involving animals, in communicating information to the public, including impacted animal owners.

- 1:2 Maintaining representation in the State Operations Center (SOC), Disaster District Committees (DDCs), and as members of the TAHC disease and non-disease field incident management teams (IMTs), as needed.
- 1:3 Assisting TAHC in situation report (SITREP) preparation in the ICP for animal-related incidents.
- 1:4 Assisting in management of web communications systems in the ICP for an animal-related incident.
- 1:5 Assisting TAHC and other state and federal agencies relative to animal indemnity issues by providing resource information such as market data and replacement costs.
- 1:6 Providing applicable agricultural media representation and support for ongoing animal issues at an animal agriculture ICP through the Joint Information Center (JIC), the Public Information Officer Liaison position, and the Outreach Division.
- 1:7 Disseminating appropriate public information for ongoing animal-related incidents in concert with TAHC command as a part of the ICP incident management structure.
- 1:8 Working with USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) officials to provide damage assessment information to the ICP for animal-related issues.
- 1:9 Requiring all county Extension agents and certain specialists receive training in the National Incident Management System (NIMS) and Incident Command System.
- 1.10 Assisting in securing remote information technology equipment for the ICP.
- 1.11 Assisting in staffing a phone bank and providing telephone messaging at the ICP, as appropriate.
- 1:12 Coordinating response activities with TAHC.

Texas AgriLife Extension, during the other three phases of emergency management--preparedness, recovery, and mitigation--will commit to the following for animal health-related activities, including foreign and emerging animal diseases and animal-related, non-disease situations:

- 2:1 Providing FEAD-related educational information to affected farmers and ranchers.
- 2:2 Assisting in presenting and evaluating public sociological and economic issues related to a FEAD incident.
- 2:3 Assisting in presenting air and water safety issues related to a FEAD.

2:4 Assisting in presenting biosecurity and other public information related to a FEAD response operation.

2.5 Collaborating with TAHC planners and local emergency management coordinators in establishing county, city, and regional Animal Issues Committees (AICs), AIC Plans, and Community Animal Response Plans (CARPs) in order that emergency response and recovery actions involving animals can be more effective.

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

Incident Resource Team(IRT)	Chair	Telephone	Email
Animal Disease Issues IRT (19 specialists)	Jason Cleere Dept. of Animal Science	979-458-3304 o 936-349-2051 c	jjcleere@ag.tamu.edu
	Blair Fannin, PIO AgriLife Communications	979-845-2259	b-fannin@tamu.edu
Drought IRT (12 specialists)	Travis Miller Soils and Crop Sciences	979-845-4808	td-miller@tamu.edu
	Steve Byrns, PIO AgriLife Communications	325-653-4576	s-byrns@tamu.edu
Wildfires IRT (8 specialists)	Eric Taylor Ecosystem Science & Mgmt	903-834-6191	eric-taylor@tamu.edu
	Megan Dominguez Ecosystem Science & Mgmt	361-265-9203	mkdominguez@ag.tamu.edu
	Kay Ledbetter, PIO AgriLife Communications	806-677-5600	skledbetter@ag.tamu.edu
Agency Liaison to State Operation Center	Andy Vestal – Extension Homeland Security/ Emergency Management	979-862-3013 o 979-229-5710 c	t-vestal@tamu.edu

Prepared 30Nov11
 Tom A. “Andy” Vestal, Ph.D.
 Professor and Extension Specialist
 Homeland Security/Emergency Management
 Texas AgriLife Extension Service