The impact of a natural disaster on a community always makes headlines. If you happen to be a livestock farmer, the impact on you seldom makes headlines, but it makes a big impact on you, your livestock and the viability of your operation.

Many natural disasters give you little or no warning, but flooding is usually forecast, giving farmers time to think about contingency plans and take action.

**QUESTIONS FOR PLANNING**

Your specific plan of action will vary by the type of livestock operation, but there are many common questions to address if flooding is a possibility at your farmstead or livestock facility.

Consider these questions for your livestock operation:

- Where can I take livestock that is safe from floodwaters?
- How will I move livestock?
- Where will I secure enough trucks/trailers to move livestock in a timely fashion?
- Who will be available to help? Might they have their own livestock to move?
- Is there appropriate shelter and fencing at the temporary site?
- Is there feed at the site or will I have to haul feed there?
- How and when will I move feed?
- How much feed will I need?
- Do I need to move implements and feeding equipment?
- Where will I access fuel for implements?
- If my usual source of commercial feed is unable to deliver feed, what alternative sources do I have?
- If I have to reduce feeding amounts to stretch the supply, how will I ration it out?
- What about bedding material?
- Is there adequate water on the site?
- Are there adequate water fountains or tanks?
- If I am able to stay in my home, will I be able to get to the livestock location?
PLAN FOR POWER LOSS

If you are able to leave your livestock at home but the power goes off for hours or even days:

- How will you water your livestock?
- How will you provide ventilation for your stock?
- How will you milk the cows?
- How will you cool the milk?
- How will you get the milk into a tanker and off to market?
- How long can you store milk on the farm before you have to dump some of it?
- If the road washes out or is blocked, how can you get milk out?
- If you have an emergency power generator, will it start when you need it?
- How long can your generator run continuously?
- How is the generator fueled and can you keep it supplied?
- If injured livestock needs to be euthanized, how will you do it?
- How and where will you dispose of mortalities?
- If your labor force is disrupted, where can you find the help to get the work done?
- Have you considered whether you would re-establish the business you now have if it entirely disappeared due to a natural disaster?

You probably don't have answers to all those questions right now, but start thinking about them. Engage the innovative thinking of the rest of your family and people who are part of your farming operation.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

www.extension.umn.edu/flood
Fact sheets and videos with research-based tips on immediate and long-term flood issues

Flood Information Line: 1-800-232-9077, fil@umn.edu
For questions about water, crops, horticulture, and climatology issues

AnswerLine: 1-800-854-1678, answer@iastate.edu
For questions about cleaning, stains, mildew, and food safety issues

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