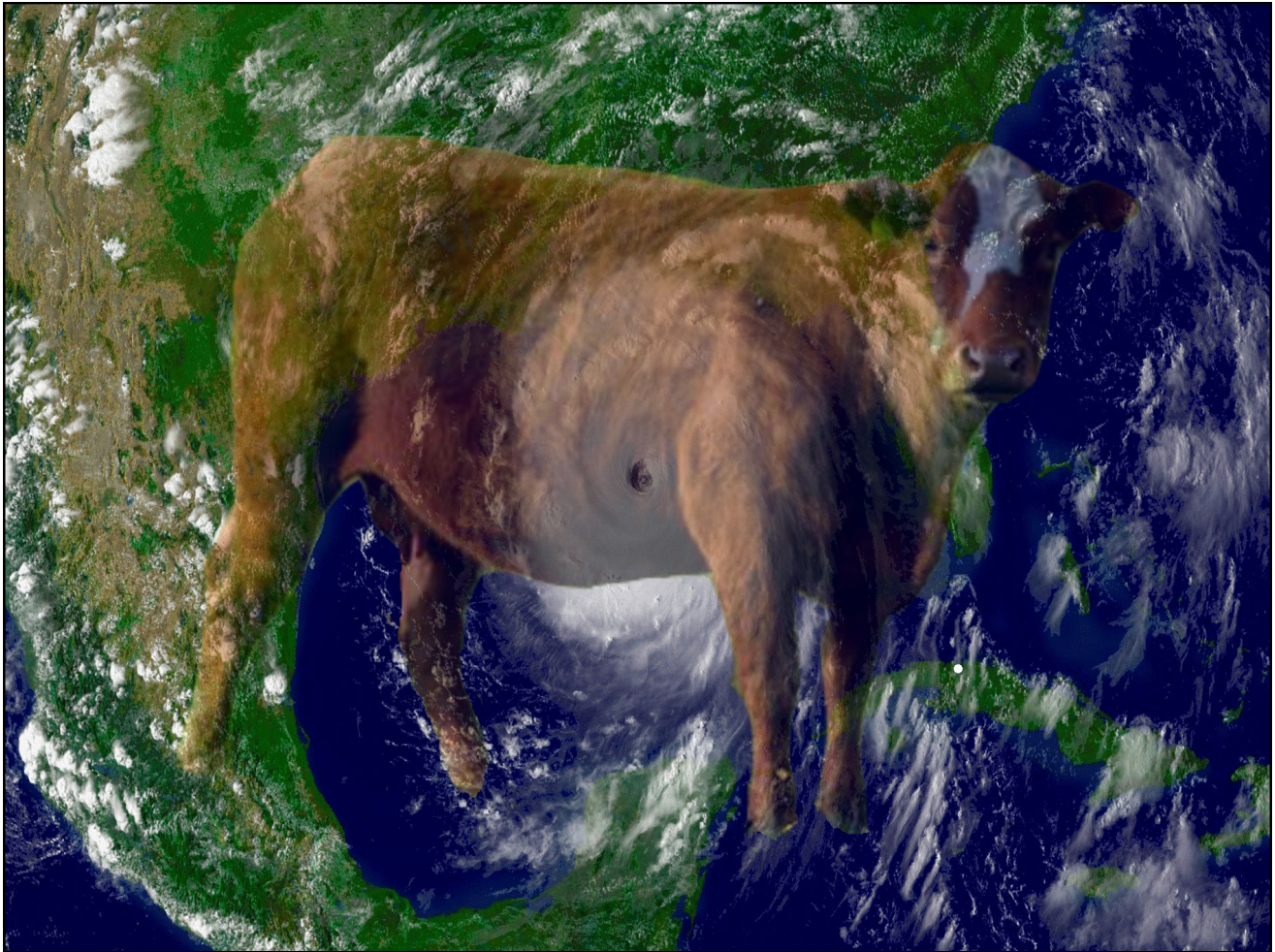


**Identification • Water • Feed • Evacuation**

TEXAS A&M  
**AGRI LIFE**  
EXTENSION



# **LIVESTOCK - HURRICANE PREPAREDNESS GUIDE**

**Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service - Brazoria County**

*Educational programs of the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service are open to all people without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, genetic information or veteran status. The Texas A&M University System, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the County Commissioners Courts of Texas Cooperating*

*Dear Brazoria County Citizens,*

*In January of 2008, the Brazoria County Office of Emergency Management formed the Animal Issues Committee, whose purpose is to develop a response plan to aid animals in a disaster. Brazoria County has taken the most common sense approach to preparing and responding to an animal disaster in the development of our plan. The foundation of our plan begins with informing the public of evacuation shelters for pets and high value livestock, and ends with a database of 280+ local responders with identified resources to lend in the recovery effort. The plan includes representation of the animal industry at the Emergency Operations Command post during a hurricane event. We hope that the information in this publication will help you and your neighbors to better prepare for the next hurricane.*

*Sincerely,*

*Your Brazoria County Animal Issues Committee*



## **Evacuating Brazoria County - Where to Go?**

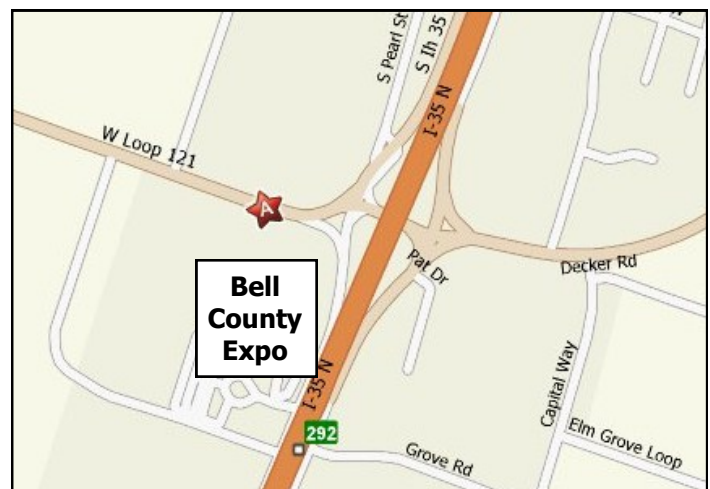
Our assigned public shelter at the Bell County Expo in Belton, Texas can accommodate shelter for 150 cattle, 179 horses, and 300 head of sheep, swine and goats combined. The Expo is located on I-35 at exit #292 in Belton, Texas. When evacuating, as a courtesy call, contact Mr. Lyle Zoeller (254) 933-5305 before leaving home to let Bell County know you're coming.

Other shelters for high value livestock are available throughout the state, but contact information on those sites isn't released until 120 to 72 hours before a storm makes landfall. As this information is received it will be posted on the Brazoria County website at [www.brazoria-county.com](http://www.brazoria-county.com) and at the Emergency Management office at (979) 864-1064.



## **Accommodations Close by the Bell County Expo**

If you do not want to stay in the public shelter yourself, but would like to be near your high-value livestock. There is a La Quinta Inn and Suites at 229 West Loop 121, Belton, TX, (254) 939-2772, across the street from the Expo Center. This will allow you easy and convenient access for caring for your livestock. Call as soon as you know you will be evacuating to reserve your room. There are also several other hotels in and around Belton and nearby Temple, Texas.



## Evacuating Livestock

What livestock to evacuate is something one should give a lot of consideration. Hurricane Ike in 2008 delivered a storm surge that traveled inland approximately 14 miles, impacting 20,000 head of cattle, and killing 4,000 to 5,000 head of adult cows—an economic impact of \$14,000,000. Animals located on lands prone to flooding and storm surge should most definitely be evacuated. If you have friends or family who have a place to board your livestock, that is your best choice.

Public shelters are temporary, lasting maybe a couple of days. Shelters for high value livestock are available throughout the state, but contact information on those sites isn't released until 120 to 72 hours before a storm makes landfall. A list of livestock shelters is also available to the public during evacuation by dialing **2-1-1**. Keep in mind that public shelters provide only shelter and water. Feed and hay are the owners responsibility.

**Public shelters require all equine to have current vaccinations and Coggins test paperwork.** When on the road with vehicles hauling livestock in a hurricane evacuation of any size, animals should be evacuated no less than 72 hours before a storm makes landfall.

However, “evacuating” doesn’t necessarily mean moving livestock (goats, sheep, cattle, horses, etc.) out of the county. Many times livestock can simply be evacuated to higher elevations and out of flood plains. **Never stall horses in barns during a hurricane.** Whether livestock are moved to safer grounds within the county, or if they’re evacuated out of the county, there are things to consider in either scenario. After the storm passes, there may not be fences, water, etc. for your livestock once you return home. When evacuating it’s best to plan for long term, rather than a couple of days.



Moving cattle to higher ground is only as good as you can keep them there. Cattle will travel with the wind. Good fences or strong cattle pens are necessary to keep cattle from traveling with the wind and into storm surge or flooded waterways.

## Supplies

Prepare early for hurricane season by creating a “Disaster Kit.” Keep your kit well stocked and in an easy to get to location. Be sure to include the following items:

- Supplies for temporary identification of your animals if they do not have permanent ID
- First Aid Kits for both Humans and Animals
- Handling Equipment such as Halters, Leads and Cages
- Water, Feed, and Buckets
- Sanitation Supplies
- Cell phones, Flashlights, Portable Radios and Batteries
- Food, Water, and Disaster Supplies for your Family or Employees
- Current list of all animals, including their location and records of feeding, vaccinations, and tests. Make sure that you have proof of ownership for all animals. This includes but is not limited to receipts from livestock bought and sold, registration papers, veterinary records, etc. This proof of ownership is necessary if you must apply for livestock indemnity payments with USDA-Farm Services Agency.

## Identify Your Livestock

Whether livestock remain in the county, or are evacuated out of the path of the storm, your livestock should be identified. Nothing is better than a permanent hot iron or freeze brand that is properly registered under your name at the County Clerk's Office. Ear notches can be helpful, but are not a positive ID. Horses can be permanently identified with microchips or tattoos. Keep ownership records with you as you evacuate. Take pictures of yourself with



your livestock to help with identification if they become lost or if ownership is disputed. You can use temporary forms of identification including halters with ID plates, fetlock ID bands, mane clips or luggage tags braided into tails and manes. Do NOT tie tags around the tails as this would cut off circulation. You can

also write on your animals with livestock marking crayon, non-toxic, non-water-soluble spray paint, or non-water-soluble markers.

Never attach Coggins papers to your animal as this is a ticket for thieves to take them across state lines.



Above is a picture of an evacuee's telephone number engraved with clippers into the hair of a horse's neck. Be sure to include your area code as your animal might end up far away from home. This is a good idea even if the horse is evacuated to a public shelter in another county. It's only temporary, and the hair will grow back!

## Feed & Water

Hay and water are the most important items for livestock in both hurricane evacuation and recovery. Carry sufficient water with you on the livestock trailer—you might get caught in traffic on the evacuation route. It is recommended to carry a three day supply of water per animal if you're evacuating livestock out of the county.

Daily Water Intake	
Animal	Gallons Water
Horses	18
Cattle	23
Swine	6
Sheep/Goat	3
Chickens	1
Turkeys	2



Be prepared for after the storm by filling storage tanks and have a generator available to hook up to your well pump. Keep plenty of hay and feed secured in a dry location. You may need to supplement for some time depending on how effected your property was by storm surge. Cattle should not drink water with a salt content over 5,000 ppm.

## Livestock After the Storm

Before evacuating, plan for the recovery phase by having a least one week of hay and water supply for each horse or cow ~150 gallons of water/animal/week. You may want to fill storage tanks, water troughs, or have a generator available to run water wells. Before bringing livestock home, assess your property for damages. Is water available? Did pastures flood from storm surge? Will grazing be sustained? Did fences survived the storm?



If you have any questions, or know of livestock in need of assistance after the storm passes, contact your local Texas AgriLife Extension Office or County Emergency Management Office. Agriculture professionals will be on staff at the EOC to handle the livestock recovery effort.



## Preparing Youth Livestock Projects



Everything covered in this guide pertaining to preparation, evacuation, and recovery of livestock also applies to youth livestock projects. However, there are a few things we've learned from past storms that we might want to apply a bit differently to youth livestock projects.

Hurricane season runs annually from June 1st to November 30th. The difficulty of this season is that this is the typically the time when animals are on feed for your County Fair. Not always, but historically, hurricanes impact Texas counties in the month of September.

When a storm is likely to impact your County, you're faced with the decision of evacuating your show animals to safe ground, hoping to still have something to show at the Fair after the storm passes. At least that's the plan. But that wasn't exactly the case with Hurricane Rita, nor with Hurricane Ike. With Hurricane Rita in 2005, many 4-H and FFA families evacuated all species of show animals (poultry, swine, sheep, goats, horses, cattle, rabbits, etc.). What happened is that the storm did not impact many counties and more animals perished in transport in the hot September sun on the highway, than did if they were left at home with fans running, and plenty of feed and water.

Mostly it was show broilers, turkeys, and swine that perished during the evacuation with Hurricane Rita.

But with Ike in 2008, many were impacted by the storm—in terms of physical damage and lack of electricity and water. Animals left at home may have gone without electricity to run fans or wells to pump water. But the good thing is that many families were able to return home early on Saturday and Sunday after Ike to tend to animals. Those without generators were in worse shape than those with generators to run fans and water wells.

Because of lessons learned from past storms, the Animal Issues Committee recommends the following plans for evacuating certain species:

**Show Broilers, Turkeys, and Swine:** Don't attempt to evacuate. The stress of travel is more on these animals than leaving them at home with a three to four day supply of feed and water. See page 2 for minimum daily water requirements of poultry and swine. Have a generator on hand.

**Show Horses, Beef Cattle, Goats, Rabbits, and Lambs:** Evacuate these animals. They will handle the stress of travel better than swine and poultry. Travel with water, keeping animals comfortable. It's best to travel at night with your show animals.