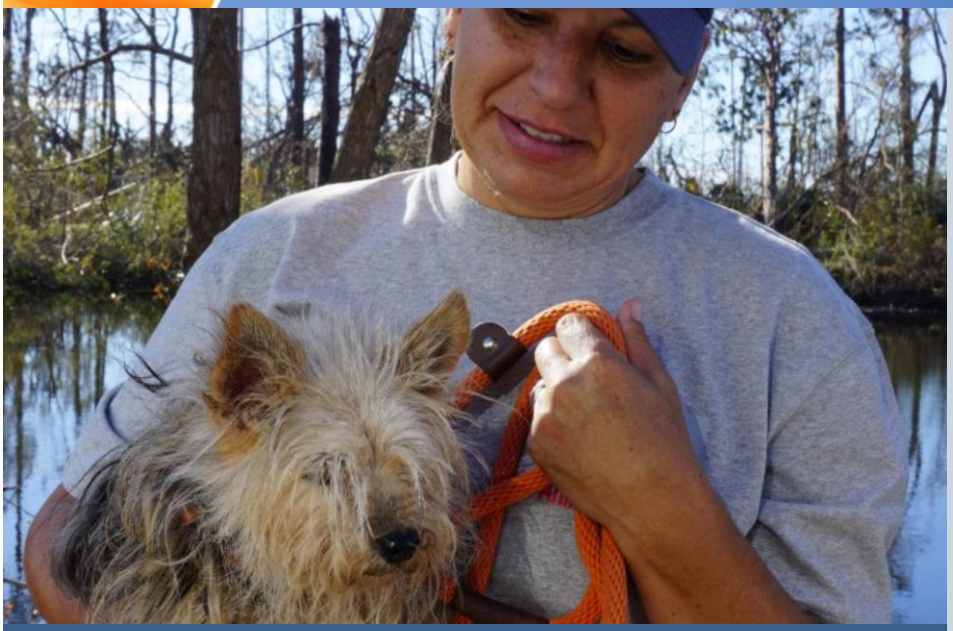
The Sentinel

Newsletter of the Florida State Agricultural Response Team



Thanks to SART funding, Florida SARC is offering free classes in January.

FLSARC Offering Free Online Classes in January!

Thanks to funding from the Florida State Agricultural Response Team (SART), the Florida Animal Response Coalition (FLSARC) is offering three Awareness (Level 1) classes in January for you, your family, and friends. Using the promo code "**FLSART**," the classes will be offered free of charge for animal lovers who want to help during natural disasters or animal cruelty responses.

FLSARC provides emergency animal sheltering training for Florida, its counties, and communities. These courses teach the unique procedures, skills, and knowledge necessary to build and operate a temporary emergency animal shelter in response to natural disasters and large cruelty cases.

These courses were created and designed by experts from many organizations including Florida SART, the University of Florida Veterinary Emergency Treatment Service (UF VETS) team, and leadership of FLSARC. Classes have been moved online via Zoom video conferencing for safety and convenience.

The Florida Division of Emergency Management has certified this course. Successful completion is required to deploy with The FLSARC Volunteer Responder Team. The class is about 8 hours long. Some dates are scheduled on two weekend mornings from 9am to 1pm and one is on three weekday evenings from 6:30pm to 9:00pm.

For additional details, and to register, please see page 11.

Special Features of this Issue:

- *ESF 17 and SART Prepare for "FAD SAFE 2021"*
- *ESF17 Continues to Support Migrant Farmworker COVID-19 Response*
- *Veterinary Forensic Sciences at the University of Florida*

"In total, 3,289 assessments were completed and over $1,963,040 of food product were estimated to be destroyed due to incidents in 2020."

— Summer Williams
Emergency Response Coordinator
Division of Food Safety, FDACS
Story on Page 12

ESF 17 and SART Prepare for "FAD SAFE 2021"

You may be wondering *what is FAD SAFE?* The Foreign Animal Disease Southern Agriculture Functional Exercise, or "FAD SAFE," is a functional **exercise** designed to test state and federal agricultural agency response capabilities to a multi-state Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) outbreak, a foreign animal disease in livestock. The Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS) will participate in and lead the exercise for Florida's response. The five-day exercise, sponsored by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), will have participation from federal, state, local, tribal, and agriculture industry representatives.

In preparation for the FAD SAFE in November, a series of preparatory trainings will be conducted in 2021 to prepare FDACS, Emergency Support Function (ESF) 17 and SART. Trainings will include Incident Management Team training, Public Information Officer and Joint Information Center training, FAD Response Plan Tabletop Exercise, National Veterinary Stockpile Response Plan drills, large animal carcass management drills, and more. Below is a summary of activities held thus far.

In December, ESF 17's veterinary medical officers participated in an Emergency Management Response System (EMRS) refresher training hosted by USDA. EMRS is a web-based application managed by USDA and used by FDACS ESF 17 for the reporting of routine animal disease investigations, foreign animal diseases, surveillance and control programs, state specific animal disease outbreaks, and national animal health emergency responses. EMRS will be used by FDACS ESF 17 during the FAD SAFE. Another EMRS new user training is scheduled for FDACS ESF 17 staff on January 6th, 2021.

ESF 17 Continues to Support Migrant Farmworker COVID-19 Response

ESF 17 continued to coordinate with the State Emergency Operations Center, University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, and local governments to provide COVID-19 mobile testing sites for migrant farmworkers in Collier, Hendry, Miami-Dade, Hillsborough, and Glades Counties through December. With the focus of the COVID-19 response moving towards vaccination in 2021, the opening of COVID-19 testing sites for migrant farmworker communities will be on an as needed basis beginning in January 2021. ESF 17 leads the FDACS COVID-19 Farmworker Testing Working Group with weekly coordination meetings. COVID-19 tests were provided at no cost to farmworkers. The locations, dates of operation, and operating times of these testing sites can be found here: https://www.fdacs.gov/News-Events/Press-Releases/2020-Press-Releases/UPDATE-Additional-County-Farmworker-COVID-19-Testing-Availability2.

ESSENTIAL PERSONNEL

Include and define who your **essential** and **critical** personnel are on your **Emergency Response Plan**

Who is considered **essential** personnel?

- Staff essential for operations and animal care

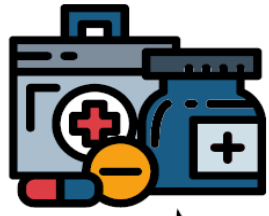
Who is considered **critical** personnel?

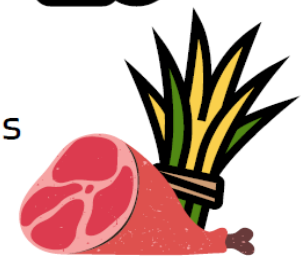
- Staff with technical knowledge and skills to perform specific animal care and facility functions

Evaluate needs for

Animal standards for maintenance

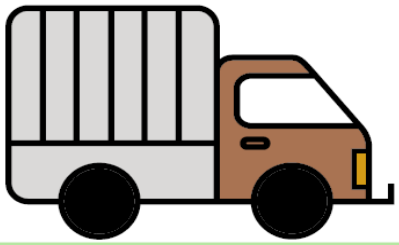
- Personnel familiar with medications needed for certain animals
- Feeding schedules





Animal standards for safety

- Special handling
- Animal behavior
- Animal transportation/ relocation



Site security

- Fencing
- Weather security
- Horticulture
- Surveillance
- Life support
  - Power restoration
  - UV lights
- Evaluate needs for maintaining facility, staff, and animal security and functionality

Courtesy of the Georgia Zoo & Exotic Risk Communication Workgroup

SART Strategic Planning: Resource Matrix

Over the past two years, SART partner agencies have collaborated through strategic planning meetings to identify important goals and initiatives for SART to achieve over the next three years. Due to the pandemic, several of these initiatives were delayed. Despite the delays the pandemic caused for SART activities, SART partners identified critical initiatives to continue accomplishing. One of these initiatives is the establishment of a SART Resource Matrix.

The SART Resource Matrix is a spreadsheet that details the mission area, equipment resources, facility resources, and personnel resources that each SART partner agency can contribute to the ESF 17 mission and response. The SART Resource Matrix will be used as a tool to identify and mobilize partner resources during an emergency as well as an educational tool to help SART partners understand the roles and capabilities of the SART multiagency coordination group.

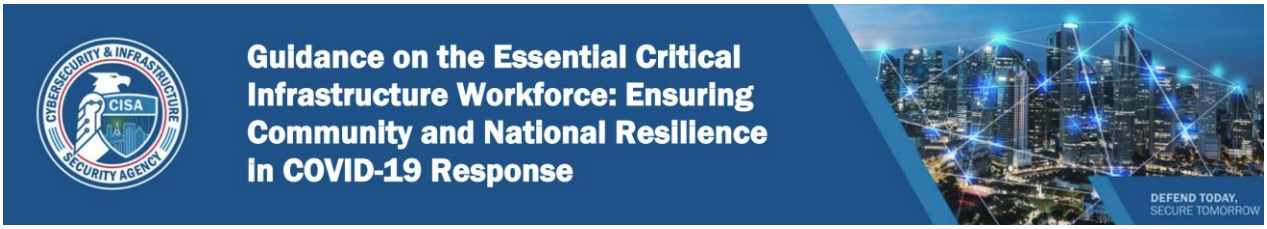
The SART Resource Matrix is in development and expected to be completed in 2021.

SART Hosts Incident Command System 300 & 400 Training for ESF 17

Made possible by SART, ESF 17 held a week-long combined Incident Command System 300 and 400 combo training for FDACS staff who would be tasked to respond for ESF 17. Attendees learned how to use the Incident Command System to size up a disaster, form an Incident Management Team (IMT), and use the IMT planning process to respond to a hypothetical emergency event.

Sixteen FDACS staff from Animal Industry, Agricultural Environmental Services, Plant Industry, and Agricultural Law Enforcement attended the training in Gainesville at the Division of Plant Industry's Doyle Conner Building. The classroom allowed for social distancing and face masks were required at all times.

CISA Continues to Support Essential Critical Infrastructure Workers During COVID-19



As the nation continues to respond to the pandemic, it is important that considerations regarding essential critical infrastructure workers continue to inform response policies and activities. The ability of these workers to perform their jobs safely is critical to our nation's ability to maintain resilience of National Critical Functions.

It is for this reason that the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) is re-promoting its Essential Critical Infrastructure Workforce Guidance, Version 4.0 for COVID-19 response. This version is intended to help state, local, tribal, and territorial officials and organizations protect their workers and communities, and ensure the continued safe and secure operation of critical infrastructure. The guidance identifies the universe of essential workers that may require specialized risk management strategies to help them work safely.

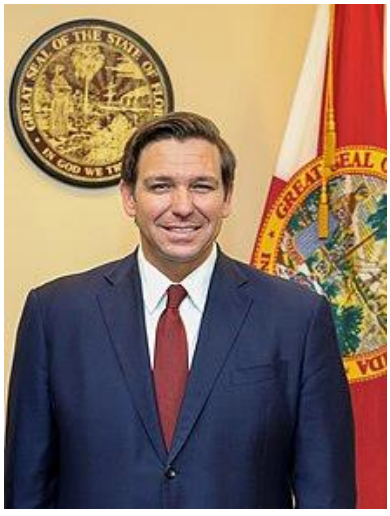
As the nation enters a new phase of pandemic response – where vaccines are available in very limited supply, and where infection rates are driving the continued application of public health measures in communities – we encourage state and local health officials to use this guidance to support COVID-19 vaccine prioritization planning.

CISA will continue to work with partners in the critical infrastructure community to update and promote the guidance as needed. For more information on the Essential Critical Infrastructure Workers Guidance or CISA's response efforts to COVID-19, please visit www.cisa.gov/coronavirus.

Governor Ron DeSantis Announces Executive Order Prioritizing Vaccination for Individuals 65 and Older

Last month, Governor Ron DeSantis announced Executive Order 20-315, which provides the directive that during this first phase of vaccine administration, all providers administering any COVID-19 vaccine shall only vaccinate the following populations:

- Long-term care facility residents and staff;
- Persons 65 years of age and older; and
- Health care personnel with direct patient contact.



Hospitals, however, also may vaccinate persons who they deem to be extremely vulnerable to COVID-19.

Governor DeSantis also announced that in addition to hospitals, County Health Departments will begin vaccinating individuals 65 and older in the coming weeks as supply permits. At this time, a limited amount of COVID-19 vaccine has been received by select County Health Departments; as more doses become available, County Health Departments will work with their community partners to provide vaccines to those 65 and older.

Read More: https://www.flgov.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/EO_20-315.pdf

SPECIAL SECTION: COVID-19 Resources

Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services General Information

- ESF17 and SART partners have provided animal and pet resources on FDACS' dedicated COVID-19 page: http://www.fdacs.gov/coronavirus

CDC Releases Interim Guidance for Disaster Sheltering/Pet-Friendly Sheltering During COVID-19

- Due to the COVID-19 outbreak overlapping with the 2020 hurricane season, plans to prevent transmission of the COVID-19 virus in disaster shelters are being created. Guidance released by the CDC recommends "collocated" sheltering for pets in (animal areas) separate from the human sheltering area, and to separate animals 6 feet, if possible, to reduce human-to-human transmission in the animal area. Click here to read the interim guidance document.

Animals, Pets, and COVID-19

- ESF 17 Information packet Regarding Animal Shelters, Mosquitoes, and Food Safety
- Frequently Asked Questions for Veterinarians and Pet Owners (American Veterinary Medical Association)
- Important COVID-19 Information for Animal Shelters (University of Florida Maddie's Shelter Program)
- Protecting Yourself, Your Pets, and the Community from COVID-19 (Florida Veterinary Medical Association)
- HSUS COVID-19 Information Webpage provides information for Pet Owners
- ESF 17 Posts Information about Caring For Your Horses During COVID-19
- New CDC FAQs now available for "How can I safely run my equestrian facility?"
- Caring for pets from COVID-19 Exposed Homes: https://sheltermedicine.vetmed.ufl.edu/2020/05/21/watch-caring-for-covid-19-exposed-pets-in-shelters/
- Interim Infection Prevention and Control Guidance for Veterinary Clinics Treating Companion Animals during COVID-19 Response: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/veterinarians.html

Food Safety and COVID-19

- FDA COVID-19 Food Safety Webpage: https://www.fda.gov/food/food-safety-during-emergencies/food-safety-and-coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19
- The University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (UF/IFAS) has released COVID-19 resources for Florida's shellfish growers: http://shellfish.ifas.ufl.edu/news/covid-19-resources-for-shellfish-growers/
- FDA COVID-19 Frequently Asked Questions: https://www.fda.gov/emergency-preparedness-and-response/coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19/coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19-frequently-asked-questions
- Association of Food and Drug Officials Coronavirus Resources: http://www.afdo.org/coronavirus-resources

SART Partner COVID-19 Webpages

- The UF/IFAS COVID-19 Webpage provides information resources for agricultural producers and consumers: https://ifas.ufl.edu/covid19-information-updates/
- Florida Department of Health Coronavirus Webpage: https://floridahealthcovid19.gov/

IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR ANIMAL SHELTERS AND CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)

FDACS.gov/COVID19

WASH YOUR HANDS OFTEN WITH SOAP AND WATER FOR AT LEAST 20 SECONDS.

Protect Employees and Volunteers

There is no evidence that companion animals can spread COVID-19 or that infection would be serious for them. The virus spreads primarily from person to person. The health and safety of employees/volunteers should be the focus of every animal shelter.

- Employees and volunteers who are sick or show signs of respiratory illness should not work until they are symptom free.
- Wash your hands frequently for at least 20 seconds with soap and warm water before eating, after using the bathroom, coughing or sneezing, and touching surfaces. Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available and there is no visible dirt on your hands.
- Frequently sanitize common areas with EPA registered antimicrobial products for use against COVID-19 that are safe to use in and around the animals and shelter.
- Click here for the CDC's interim guidance for businesses and employers.

Support and Inform Your Community

Remind community members to have a plan in place for pets.

- Identify a family member/friend who can care for pets if needed.
- Have crates, food, and extra supplies on hand for quick movement of pets.
- Keep all animal vaccines up to date and document all medications and dosing.
- Pets should have ID: collar with ID tag and microchip (best practice is microchipping).

Prepare Shelter for Increased Intake

While mass intake is not likely, people who contract the virus and are hospitalized may not have someone to care for their pets. Steps to prepare include:

- Free up shelter capacity with increased adoption efforts, rescue partners, and foster homes for animals already at the shelter.
- Prepare a facility plan with your shelter veterinarian on intake and isolation protocols.
- Be prepared to identify, isolate, or divert animals that may have been exposed to COVID-19. This includes securing disinfectants and personal protective equipment that may be used safely around animals. Identify locations available for fostering, identify capacity needs, and maintain updated list.
- Have a written protocol in place to follow and provide regular staff updates to staff.
- Secure additional food/supplies for increased intake, including foster network needs.

Prepare for Staff Illness:

- Strongly encourage your employees and volunteers to stay home when sick.
- Check availability of volunteers who can assist in a staff shortage.
- Connect with local boarding facilities, surrounding shelters and rescues and communicate plans.
- Click here for the CDC's interim guidance for businesses and employers.

For more information, visit
FDACS.gov/COVID19 or CDC.gov/Coronavirus.

FDACS-P-01922

Veterinary Forensic Sciences at the University of Florida

By: Jason H. Byrd & Adam W. Stern

The Maples Center for Forensic Medicine and the Department of Comparative, Diagnostic and Population Medicine at the University of Florida have partnered to create the UF Veterinary Forensic Sciences Laboratory. This laboratory offers analytical services to law enforcement agencies, animal welfare groups, veterinarians, attorneys, and private citizens. These services include genetic analysis, species identification, osteological analysis, forensic entomology, forensic botany, forensic pathology, and forensic toxicology. On site crime scene assistance is also offered, as well as educational programs for continuing education and academic credit. Programs include:

- Genetic Analysis and Species Identification
- Forensic Pathology
- Forensic Osteology
- Forensic Toxicology
- Crime Scene Assistance
- Ground Penetrating Radar
- Educational Programs

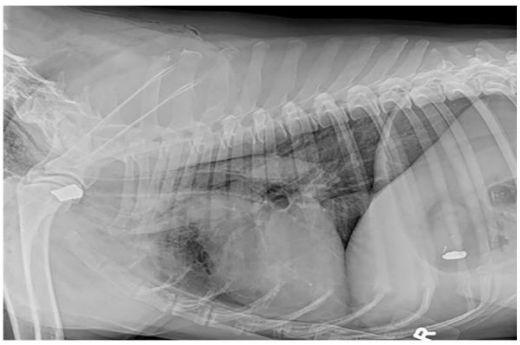
UF William R. Maples Center for Forensic Medicine UNIVERSITY of FLORIDA

The Maples Center for Forensic Medicine offers In-person, continuing education, workshops in forensic photography, forensic entomology, forensic pathology, bloodstain pattern analysis, shooting reconstruction, crime scene documentation, and a 40-hour Bugs, Bones, and Botany® course. Graduate programs are also offered in the areas of Veterinary Forensic Sciences, Wildlife Forensic Sciences, Shelter Medicine, and Forensic Medicine.

The UF Veterinary Forensic Laboratory commonly utilizes the available areas of expertise in cases of animal cruelty, poaching and illegal take of wildlife species, animal species identification, postmortem interval analysis, and genetic analysis (species identification, individual identity, and matching of evidence). The laboratory is committed to providing forensic sciences services to agencies and individuals investigating cases of animal crime involving companion animals, livestock, and wildlife species.

For more information, please visit:

- https://forensics.med.ufl.edu/dna-typing/
- https://labs.vetmed.ufl.edu/services/forensic-necropsy/
- https://maples-center.ufl.edu/continuing-education/



Radiograph of a dog showing two large bullet fragments within the body.

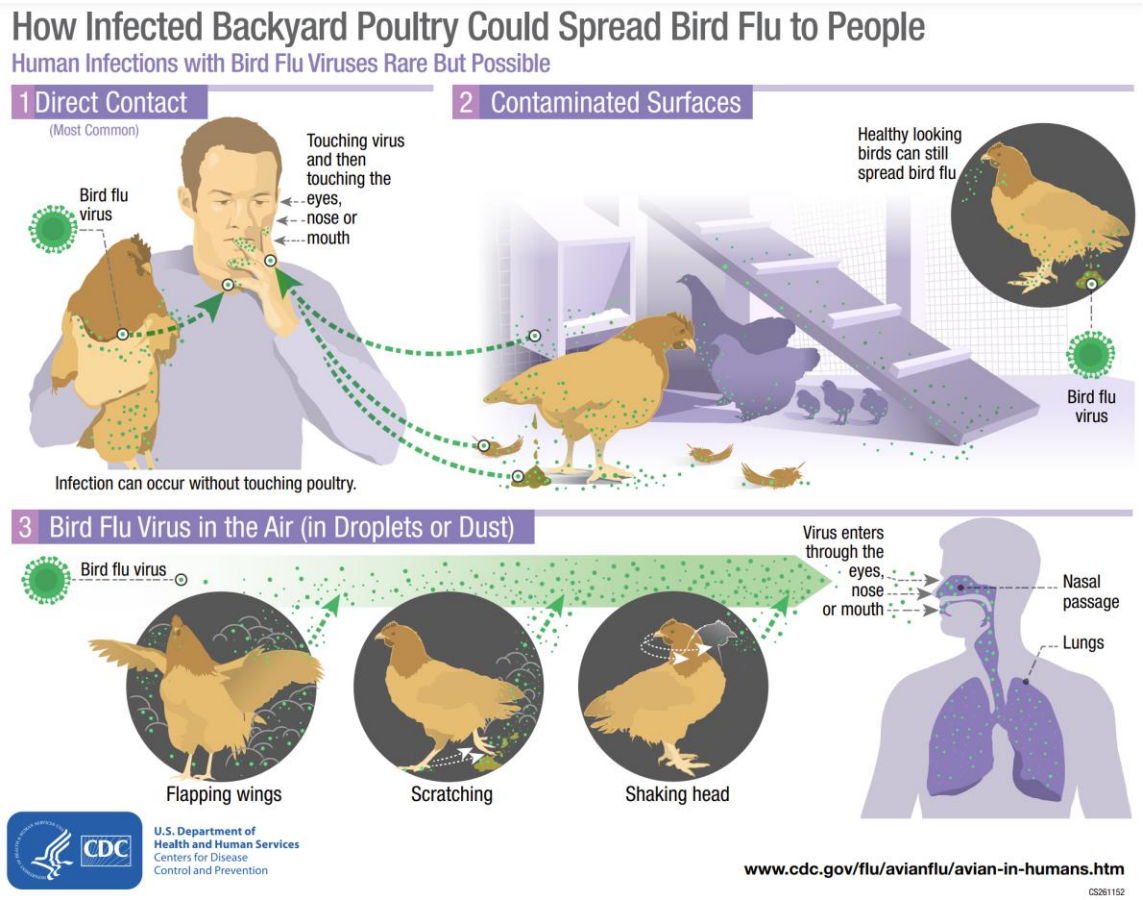
Counties, Is Your Contact Information Up-to-Date on the SART Website?

Please review your county emergency contact information at https://flsart.org/resource/countyinformation.jsp.

If you need to make changes to your county contact information, please send a request to LeiAnna Tucker at LeiAnna.Tucker@FDACS.gov. During an emergency, ESF 17 and SART provides necessary food and water to affected areas to help protect animals, agriculture and pets.

In the News

Short stories and updates from around the State, nation, and globe…



Bird Flu Spreads to 10th Japanese Prefecture

As reported by Reuters, Japan's worst bird flu outbreak on record spread to new farms and now affects more than 20% of the country's 47 prefectures, with officials ordering cullings after more poultry deaths. The outbreak in Japan and neighboring South Korea is one of two separate highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) epidemics hitting poultry around the world, according the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). Both the strain circulating in Asia and the one in Europe originated in wild birds, it said. (Reuters) Read More

Lee County Domestic Animal Services' Create "Giving Tree" to Support Shelter Pets

In honor of the holiday season, Lee County Domestic Animal Services decorated a "giving tree" to support shelter pets. The tree, located in the adoption lobby of their animal services building, was covered in ornaments that each stated a wish list of gifts for the shelter pets. Animal lovers were encouraged to pick an ornament, fulfil the wish on the ornament, and return it to Lee County Animal Services by December 21st. Once a wish was fulfilled, those who fulfilled the wish were given the ornament as a memento. While this isn't the first year that Lee County has decorated a giving tree for their shelter pets, this year was the first time the initiative was advertised on TV. Following the success of this year's initiative, Lee County Domestic Animal Services is planning to make the event even bigger next year to incorporate County Animal Services across the Southwest Florida Region. For more information on this story, click Read More

Pet-Friendly Sheltering
Online Training Announcement

The Florida State Agricultural Response Team (SART) will soon offer an online, state-certified training on pet-friendly sheltering. The online training will provide participants with guidance on how to plan for and operate a pet-friendly shelter to ensure that individuals evacuating from a disaster with household pets are accommodated.

This training will include useful information on how to:

- Use the Incident Command System in pet-friendly shelter planning and operations;
- Plan for a pet-friendly shelter;
- Understand the Pets Evacuation and Transportation Standards Act (PETS Act);
- Establish partnerships for resource coordination;
- Deliver a unified message to the public before, during and after an emergency, and;
- Set up, operate and demobilize a pet-friendly shelter.

Upon successful completion of the course, participants will receive a downloadable **Tool Kit** that offers functional guidance and plan templates. Students will also receive a **certificate** of completion approved by the Florida Division of Emergency Management and Florida SART.

RELEASE DATE
Summer 2020

COURSE DURATION
4 hours

COURSE FEE
Free

COURSE MODE
100% online at
www.FLSART.org

TARGET AUDIENCE
Emergency Managers
County Employees
Shelter Volunteers

PROVIDED BY
Florida State Agricultural Response Team, in partnership with the Florida State Animal Response Coalition

POINT OF CONTACT
LeiAnna Tucker
Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services
(850) 410-0920
LeiAnna.Tucker@FDACS.gov

Florida SARC Announces New Virtual Trainings Available in January

The Florida State Animal Response Coalition (SARC) has upcoming opportunities for their Awareness Level 1 and Operations Level 2 Small Animal Emergency Sheltering courses.

When disaster strikes, the team of trained volunteer responders will be there to shelter and protect Florida's companion animals.

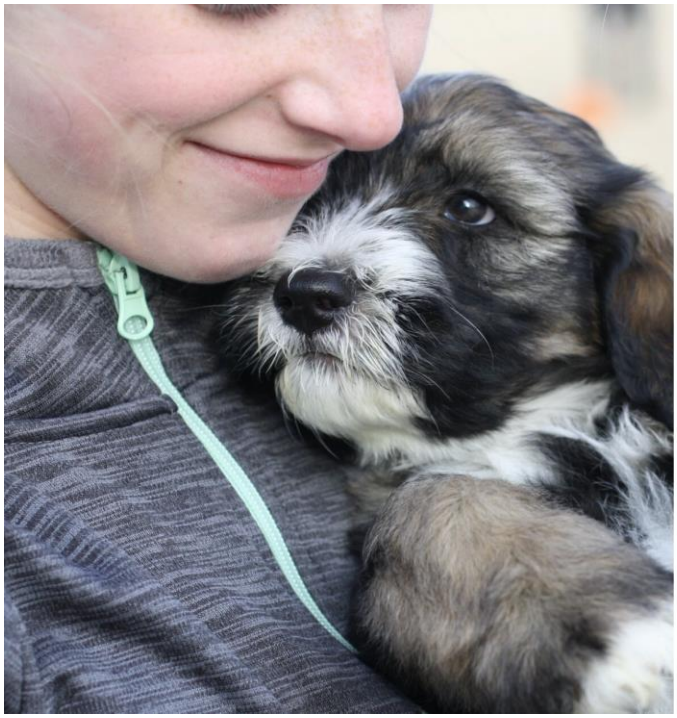
The Awareness Level 1 course (FL-003-RESP) gives students the knowledge necessary to work in a small animal emergency shelter. This class provides expertise and practical experience required to become a disaster animal responder. The Operations Level 2 (FL-607) course gives many new job options, in addition to leadership skills and team-led opportunities. This course expands upon information covered in Awareness Level 1 and ICS-100 courses. Both courses are certified by the Florida Division of Emergency Management and are geared for Florida responders who want to help companion animals and their owners during a disaster.

Course topics include: Personal Preparedness, Overview of the Incident Command System, Deployment Preparedness, Assisting in Shelter Setup, Daily Care and Feeding, Proper Cage Cleaning and Disinfection, Animal Behavior, Stress Management, Zoonotic Diseases, and Personal Safety.

Classes are now all online through Zoom conferencing. They have been divided into multiple days to improve online engagement. Level 1 classes are either 2 or 3 days, and Level 2 classes are 4 days. Students will need a computer, tablet, smartphone, or laptop with a webcam and sound to participate in these classes.

Thanks to funding from Florida SART, all course will be offered free of charge in January by using the promo code "FLSART."

For more information about the courses, and to register please visit: https://flsarc.org/training



NEW ONLINE CLASSES IN JANUARY!

Thanks to funding from the Florida State Agricultural Response Team, all courses in January will be offered free of charge by using the promo code: **FLSART**

Home | Training

Food Safety and Food Defense Report

A special section dedicated to feed and food emergency planning and response.

Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services' (FDACS) Division of Food Safety is responsible for assuring the public of a safe, wholesome, and properly represented food supply through permitting and inspection of food establishments, inspection of food products, and performance of specialized laboratory analysis on a variety of food products sold or produced in the state. The Division of Food Safety monitors food from the farm gate, through processing and distribution, to the retail point of purchase.

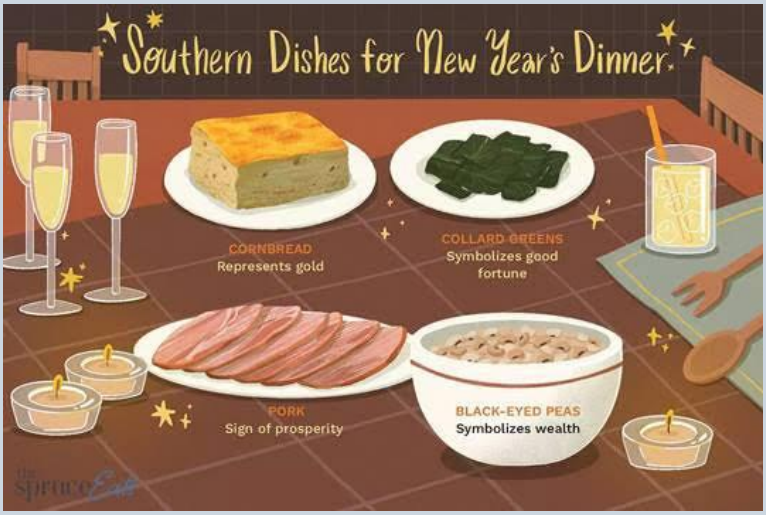
FDACS Division of Food Safety Recaps 2020

The Division of Food Safety completed emergency response assessments at regulated food and dairy facilities for 17 tornadoes, two tropical storms, one hurricane, three wildfires, and two civil unrest incidents during 2020. After these 23 events, inspection staff made contact (either by phone or visit) with facility owners to collect any information regarding to damage to the facility or food product. In total, 3,289 assessments were completed and over $1,963,040 of food product were estimated to be destroyed due to incidents in 2020. In addition to responding to most of those incidents during a pandemic, the Division activated for Super Bowl LIV in early 2020 and is already planning for Super Bowl LV taking place February 7, 2021, in Tampa. It's been a wild year to say the least. Many thanks to everyone who assisted in these efforts, and here's to hoping 2021 will be a little tamer!

Wishing you a Happy and Healthy New Year!

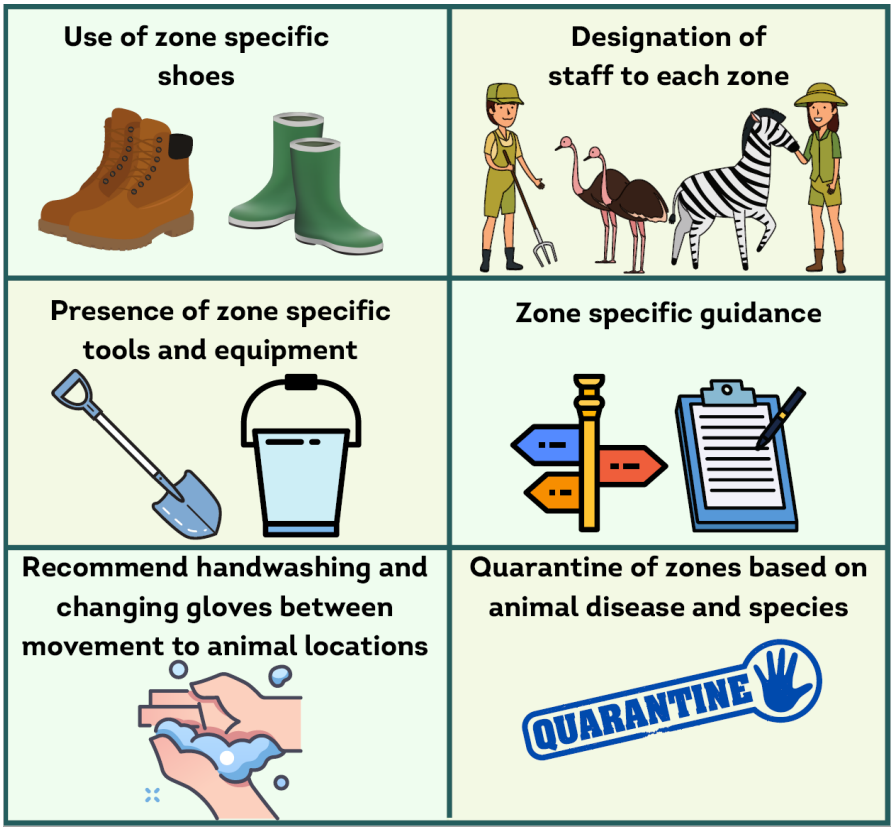
As published in *The Spruce Eats*, according to popular folklore, if these foods are eaten on New Year's Day you're guaranteed good luck throughout the year:

- Peas and beans symbolize coins or wealth. Choose traditional black-eyed peas, lentils, or beans to make a dish seasoned with pork, ham, or sausage.
- Greens resemble money, specifically folding money. Make dishes using green, leafy vegetables to ensure good fortune for the coming year. Southern favorites include boiled cabbage or sauerkraut, collard greens, kale, chard, mustard greens, and turnip greens.
- Pork is considered a sign of prosperity in some cultures because pigs root forward. This is probably the reason many Southern New Year's Day dishes contain pork or ham.
- Cornbread might symbolize gold because corn kernels represent coins. Yet, cornbread is also essential with black-eyed peas and greens, so you can triple your luck with these natural complements.
- In other cultures, fish, grapes, and ring-shaped cakes or doughnuts symbolize luck. Cakes with special treats inside do as well, so something like a surprise loaf cake is perfect.



Considerations for Animal Body Fluids and Excrement

Consider splitting the facility into zones. This will facilitate:



Courtesy of the Georgia Zoo & Exotic Risk Communication Workgroup

Please log in and update your membership information online at:

www.FLSART.org

About the *SART Sentinel*

The *SART Sentinel* is an email newsletter prepared monthly by the members of the **Florida State Agricultural Response Team**. Past issues of the *Sentinel* are archived on the Florida SART website at www.FLSART.org.

If you have a story or photo that you would like to have considered for publication in the *SART Sentinel*, please contact the editors.

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