The Sentinel

Newsletter of the Florida State Agricultural Response Team

UF VETS Animal Technical Rescue team poses for a photo.

Special Features of this Issue:

- *ESF17 Staff Continue Preparation for FAD SAFE*
- *Free Registration Open for State-Certified Virtual Small Animal Emergency Sheltering Training*
- *ESF 17 Staff Attend USDA Ag Research Service Biosafety and Biocontainment Symposium*

UF VETS Animal Technical Rescue Training Open

In January, the University of Florida (UF) Veterinary Emergency Treatment Service (VETS) team trained participants from Martin County Fire Rescue, and February saw participants from Panama City Fire, Ocean City Wright Fire, Escambia Fire, and Bay County Fire. These two final county-level trainings were made possible by the SART domestic security grant. Bay and Martin Counties both have established, regional caches of Animal Technical Rescue (ATR) equipment.

This spring will begin a new model of ATR training made available at the Florida State Fire College that is open for statewide attendance. SART has provided funding for two Awareness level and two Operations level ATR trainings this spring that will sponsor the tuition for approved registrations. Seats have filled and waitlists are being maintained for the Operations level trainings, but seats are available for the April 23rd Awareness training and the May 24th Awareness training. Register at: http://bit.ly/atrtraining. These trainings are compliant with NFPA 1006 and 1670 standards and earn continuing education credits from the Florida State Fire College.

We are also excited to announce the launch of the new online Awareness level training. This training takes a total of 5 hours to complete and will be accessible to registered participants for a period of 2 weeks. The first cohort will begin on March 8th. Registration is open now for anyone interested in participating. Register at: http://bit.ly/atrtraining.

Have questions? Contact Brandi Phillips at: brandikphillips@ufl.edu.

"To be honest, the Super Bowl LV food safety and food defense planning process began as soon as Super Bowl LV in Miami came to an end in 2020."

— Summer Williams
Emergency Response Coordinator
Division of Food Safety
Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services

ESF 17 Staff Continue Preparation for FAD SAFE

The Foreign Animal Disease Southern Agriculture Functional Exercise, or "FAD SAFE," is a functional exercise between 11 participating states designed to test state agricultural agency response capabilities to a multi-state Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) outbreak. FMD is a foreign animal disease and a severe, highly contagious viral disease of livestock that has significant economic impact.

The FDACS Division of Animal Industry (DAI) will lead the FAD SAFE for Florida's response. The four-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 exercise taking place on November 15-18, 2021, a series of trainings, exercises and meetings will be conducted to prepare FDACS, Emergency Support Function (ESF) 17, SART, and agriculture industry stakeholders for the FAD SAFE.

FAD SAFE 2021 Schedule

- **Monthly:** ESF 17 staff are now attending the monthly USDA Veterinary Services (VS) National Training and Exercise Program (NTEP) Multi State Working Group Call. In February's call, the work group reviewed the participating states support needs from the USDA VS National Incident Management Teams (NIMT) for the FAD SAFE exercise.
- **March:** FDACS DAI will host the first of three Animal Carcass Management Working Group meetings and drills. The purpose of these meetings with animal carcass disposal stakeholders is to discuss and plan for a large-scale animal carcass disposal incident in Florida. The realization of an FMD outbreak in the USA, like the scenario in the FAD SAFE exercise, would rely heavily on these stakeholders to dispose of depopulated animals. The Working Group will hold two additional meetings later this year in August and December, tentatively.
- **May:** FDACS DAI will take part in a Tri-state meeting with Georgia and Alabama state animal and agricultural health officials to discuss the logistics of an animal movement standstill scenario during a foreign animal disease outbreak. The tri-state meeting will also review the USDA FAD response plan.
- **May:** FDACS staff will attend a combo training on Public Information Officer Foundational Skills and Joint Information Center/System to prepare IMT members on how to interact with media, develop public messaging, and co-responding agencies to increase situational awareness during an animal disease outbreak.
- **July:** FDACS DAI will host a Florida Livestock Movement Standstill Tabletop Exercise with industry and government stakeholders to discuss the logistics and effects of a livestock movement standstill as a result of an animal disease outbreak in Florida.
- **September:** FDACS DAI will conduct a tabletop exercise to review and test Florida's Foreign Animal Disease Emergency Operations Plan.
- **October:** FDACS DAI will conduct a "dry run" exercise before the official FAD SAFE. The dry run exercise will be held for FDACS DAI, respectively. The exercise will focus largely on entering resource and logistics requests in EMRS and practicing foreign animal disease investigation that will take place during the official FAD SAFE in November.

Cleaning & Disinfecting

How are cleaning and disinfecting different?

Cleaning with soap and water removes some germs and dirt from surfaces but it does not kill them
It lowers the risk of spreading COVID-19

Disinfecting kills the germs on surfaces after cleaning
It further lowers the risk of spreading COVID-19

Personal Protective Equipment

What is it?

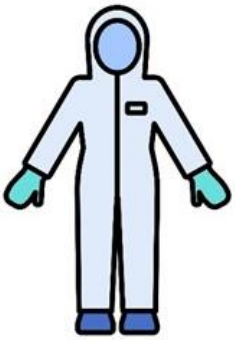
PPE is a **specialized clothing or equipment** often worn by team members to **protect themselves against health and safety hazards**

Boots

Gloves

Respirators and masks

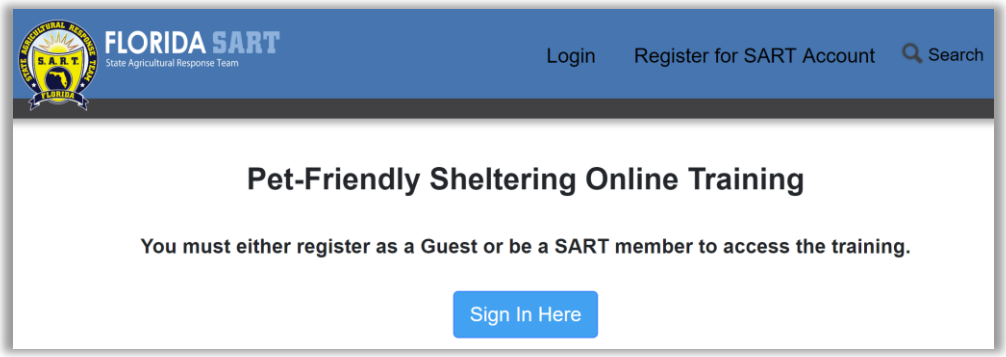
Tyvek clothing covers



Appropriate PPE **should be worn at all times** according to established protocols. PPE should be **changed, sanitized, and/or disposed of** according to existing protocols.

Source: www.cdc.gov | UGA Extension
Courtesy of the Georgia Zoo & Exotic Risk Communication Workgroup

Florida Pet-Friendly Sheltering Online Training - FREE REGISTRATION OPEN!



Course Overview
The Pet-Friendly Sheltering Online Training is the first of its kind to be offered in Florida. The training provides guidance to private, local and state entities on how to plan for and operate a pet-friendly shelter to ensure that individuals evacuating from a disaster with their household pets are accommodated. While this training will provide you with basic information and guidance, further training with local or state emergency management programs is essential to fully prepare for pet-friendly sheltering in your community. The Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services developed this training collaboratively with the Florida State Agricultural Response Team (SART).

Course Objectives
- Understand the benefits of and requirements for opening pet-friendly shelters during emergency evacuations.
- Understand the concept of the Incident Command System (ICS) and how it can be applied to pet-friendly shelter planning and operations.
- Identify strategies and planning considerations for writing a pet-friendly shelter plan for all-hazards.
- Understand the benefits of establishing partnerships and Multiagency Coordination Groups with key agencies and organizations to achieve local resource allocation for pet-friendly shelter preparedness.
- Understand the critical role social media plays in emergency communications, and how to develop an accurate and effective message about available pet-friendly shelters in a disaster.
- Apply best practices when setting up a pet-friendly shelter.

Primary Audience
The target audience includes local and state government agencies, emergency management agencies, county employees, shelter volunteers, veterinary and animal care services, and persons involved with the planning and response for emergency sheltering of individuals and household pets during disasters.

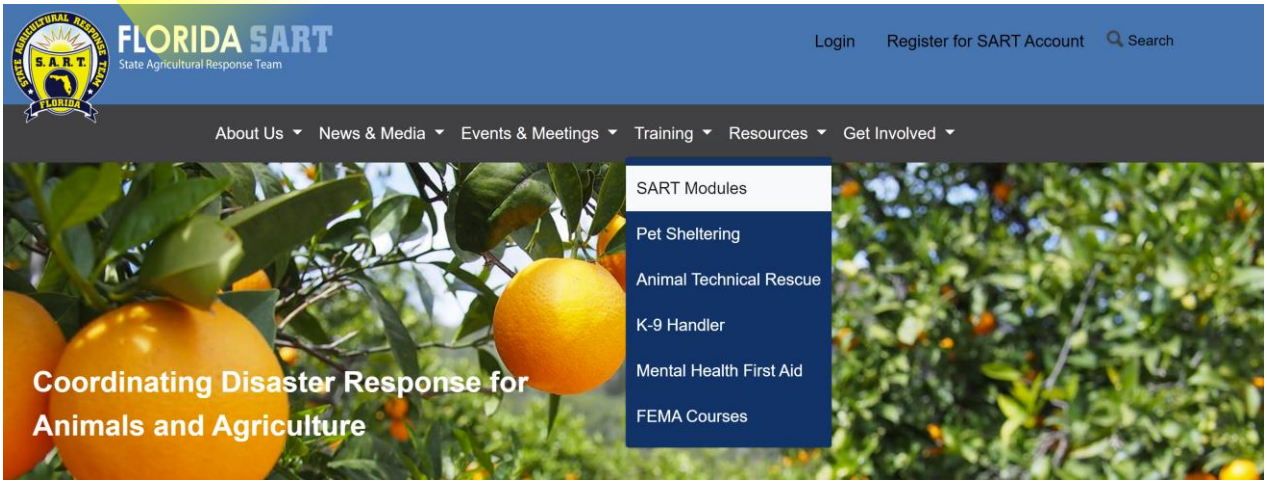
Prerequisites
None

Course Length
Total course length is approximately 4 hours to complete. You will be given 7 days to complete this training from the date you register. If you do not complete the training within 7 days, then your training registration will restart, and you will be required to complete the training from the beginning again.

Course Requirements
Students must pass the Final Exam to receive the certificate of completion.

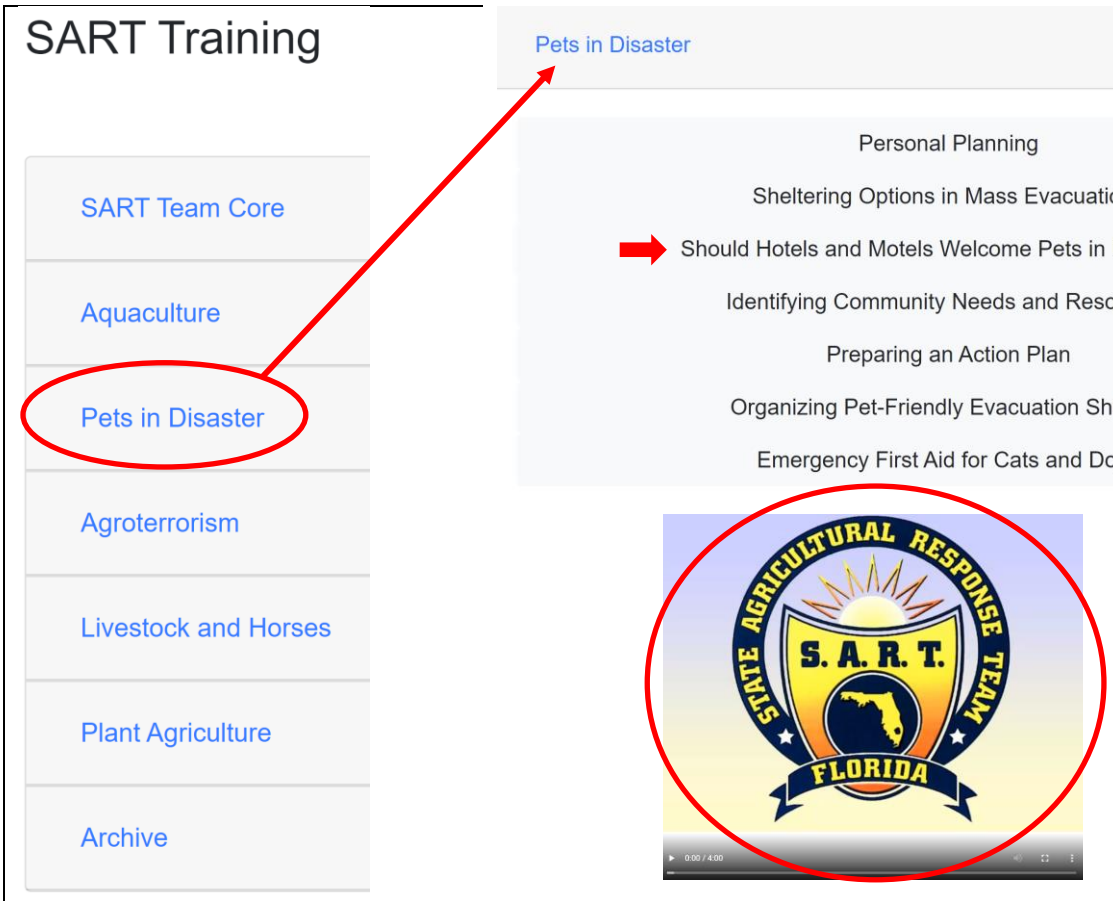
For More Information and to Register
Please visit the Florida SART website at: https://flsart.org/petfriendly/index.jsp

SART Spotlight: Website Training Modules



Did you know… the SART website (www.flsart.org) contains a tremendous amount of information, training opportunities, and resources. In three easy steps, let's focus on accessing the SART Modules:

1. Visit www.flsart.org
2. In the top menu, select "Training," then "SART Modules."
3. Select a topic from the list below and begin your self-guided training.



SPECIAL SECTION: COVID-19 Resources

Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services General Information

- ESF 17 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

Free Registration Open for State-Certified Virtual Small Animal Emergency Sheltering Training

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

These courses are made possible by Florida SART and are **free of charge**! Use **promo code** "**ESF17**" to waive all fees when registering. All trainings will be held virtually via Zoom video conferencing.

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, University of Florida Veterinary Emergency Treatment Service Team, and leadership of FLSARC. Both courses are state-certified by the Florida Division of Emergency Management.

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.

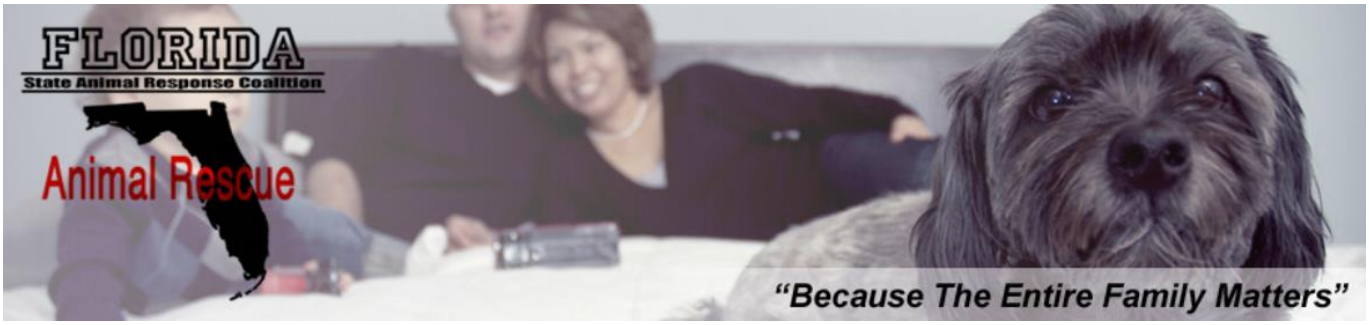
Awareness Level Courses

- 3/20-3/21 - Awareness (Level 1) Small Animal Emergency Sheltering – 9AM-1PM EST (2 Half Days)
- 4/10 Awareness (Level 1) Small Animal Emergency Sheltering – 8AM-5PM EST (1 Full Day)
- 5/1-5/2 Awareness (Level 1) Small Animal Emergency Sheltering – 9AM-1PM EST (2 Half Days)
- 5/18-5/20 Awareness (Level 1) Small Animal Emergency Sheltering – 6:30-9PM EST (3 Night Sessions)

Operations Level Courses (You must complete the awareness course before taking operations)

- 4/17-4/18, 4/24-4/25, Operations (Level 2) Small Animal Emergency Sheltering – 9AM-1PM EST (4 Half Days)

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



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…

FDACS Provides Update on Rabbit Hemorrhagic Disease
On February 15th, FDACS posted an update to their Rabbit Hemorrhagic Disease Virus Type 2 (RHDV-2) guidance. At the time of the update, no additional cases of RHDV-2 have been identified; however, rabbit owners should continue to take prudent biosecurity measures, including not purchasing hay or other commodities originating from RHDV-affected states. Montana has been added to the list of affected states. For a map of affected states, visit the USDA website here. Read More

ESF 17 Staff Attend USDA Ag Research Service Biosafety and Biocontainment Symposium
Made possible with SART funding, ESF 17 staff attended the USDA Agricultural Research Service (ARS) Biosafety & Biocontainment Symposium. This year's symposium was titled: Emerging Biorisk Challenges in Agriculture. The three-day symposium/training was an opportunity for ESF 17 to attend presentations hosted by leading experts in biosecurity and biorisk assessment and mitigation. For ESF 17, biosecurity is critical for a responding safely to an animal disease outbreak response. By attending the symposium, ESF 17 staff were exposed to information that will help to enhance preparedness for an animal disease outbreak in Florida.

Russia Reports World's First Case of Human Infection with H5N8 Bird Flu
Last month, the National IHR Focal Point for the Russian Federation notified the World Health Organization (WHO) of detection of avian influenza A(H5N8) in seven human clinical specimens. These are the first reported detection of avian influenza A(H5N8) in humans. Positive clinical specimens were collected from poultry farm workers who participated in a response operation to contain an avian influenza A(H5N8) outbreak detected in a poultry farm in Astrakhan Oblast in the Russian Federation. The laboratory confirmation of the seven specimens were performed by the State Research Centre for Virology and Biotechnology VECTOR (WHO H5 Reference Laboratory). (WHO) Read More

Tortillas Lured a Freezing Texas Dog to Safety. Guess His New Nickname?
As reported by WOAI, a San Antonio woman made multiple attempts to rescue a dog she found wandering the snow-filled streets of Texas. When all else failed, she realized she had one last idea: use tortillas. Kristin Salinas-Labrador, 28, was coming back from work when she saw a black Labrador on the road and immediately pulled over. Though she wanted to get near him, the dog was too afraid. Remembering her wife told her earlier that day to bring tortillas home, she was able to break those into pieces to slowly lure him inside the car. (WOIA) 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
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Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services
(850) 410-0920
LeiAnna.Tucker@FDACS.gov

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.

As said best by FDACS' Summer Williams, "To be honest, the Super Bowl LV food safety and food defense planning process began as soon as Super Bowl LV in Miami came to an end in 2020." As you may know, there are many food regulators in the State of Florida (Department of Business and Profession Regulation's Division of Hotels and Restaurants, Florida Department of Health, Agency for Health Care Administration, Department of Children and Families, Elder Affairs, FDACS, and two federal agencies- USDA and FDA). With many of these agencies involved with Super Bowl events, there were weekly coordination calls and planning leading up to the events.

In addition, we had to work with event coordinators to get supply and vendor lists ahead of time. Once we received these lists, FDACS performed inspections and food sample collection with our regulated entities prior to the Super Bowl affiliated events. Food samples were tested by the FDACS Division of Food Safety Bureau of Laboratories for micro pathogens and terrorist threat agents. No positive threats were found. In addition, the FDACS Division of Food Safety provided food defense resources to industry partners. USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service team also collected food samples from suppliers prior to the events (with a focus on meat products only).

The planning process was most different this time around… how would the NFL plan a large event in the middle of a pandemic? Needless to say, planning was fluid and constantly changing; however, one NFL sanctioned event stayed on schedule: Super Bowl Experience. This year, the NFL made this an outdoor event to help with the safety and health concerns with the crowds. The Riverfront area along downtown Tampa was the perfect venue for this event.

One of the FDACS regulated food establishments at Super Bowl Experience, Heavenly Puffs, even made national news! Heavenly Puffs' owner was interviewed discussing her pastry business during the pandemic. See the full video here.

Overall, it has been quite the experience hosting two back-to-back Super Bowl events in Florida. As excited as we are that our home team hit a record of not only hosting, but winning a Super Bowl on home turf, we are ready for a break! Next up, California will be hosting in 2022 at SoFi Stadium.

Food Defense Resources:

- Food Defense 101- Front Line Employee: https://www.fda.gov/food/food-defense-tools-educational-materials/food-defense-101-front-line-employee
- Employees FIRST Food Defense Awareness: https://www.fda.gov/food/food-defense-tools-educational-materials/employees-first
- See Something, Say Something Campaign- Food Sector: https://www.fda.gov/food/food-defense-tools-educational-materials/see-something-say-something-campaign
- USDA FSIS Food Defense Overview: https://www.fsis.usda.gov/wps/portal/fsis/topics/food-defense-defense-and-emergency-response/food-defense-overview

UF Veterinarians Successfully Remove Shoe from Stomach of Nile Crocodile

Photo by Sarah Carey

Anuket, a 10.5-foot, 341-pound Nile crocodile came to the UF Veterinary Hospital on February 5th for removal of a shoe she had swallowed in December. It had fallen off a zipliner at St. Augustine Alligator Farm Zoological Park, where she lives, and into her habitat.

Anuket was witnessed eating the shoe, and subsequently seen regurgitating it – then eating it right back up again. Previous efforts to flush out her sneaker at the farm and at UF had been unsuccessful. During her most recent visit to UF, Dr. Garrett Fraess, a zoological medicine resident, initially attempted to remove the shoe by reaching his arm up and through the crocodile's esophagus, but was unsuccessful.

Ultimately, Dr. Adam Biedrzycki performed a gastrotomy, which allowed easier access to the crocodile's stomach. Within a short time, he was able to remove the shoe. After an overnight stay, Anuket returned home, and has been recuperating at the park since then. (UF College of Veterinary Medicine) Read More

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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