The Sentinel

Newsletter of the Florida State Agricultural Response Team

Clinical Warning Signs of an ASF Infection

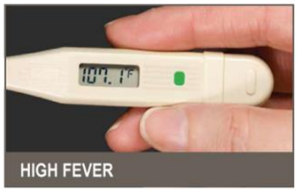


Photo Credit: USDA APHIS Foreign Animal Disease Diagnostic Laboratory, Plum Island Animal Disease Center

ALERT: African Swine Fever Detected in Dominican Republic

This The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) recently announced the detection of African Swine Fever (ASF) in the Dominican Republic (announcement here). ASF is a foreign animal disease, increased biosecurity and vigilance is warranted.

Please report any sick swine with clinical signs consistent with ASF to the State Veterinarian's Office through the e-mail address RAD@FDACS.gov, or by calling (850) 410-0900 (during office hours) or 1-800-342-5869 (after hours). You can also file a report online.

Clinical Signs

Signs of African swine fever in swine can include reddening of the skin, listlessness, vomiting, bloody diarrhea, conjunctivitis, lack of an escape response, trembling, complete loss of hind leg functioning, and high death loss.

Important to Note

Classical Swine Fever has been present in Haiti and the Dominican Republic for many years and, therefore, the U.S. does not receive pork products or live swine imports from either country. The highest risk of ASF introduction into the U.S. is from pork products brought in by international travelers via sea or air. The U.S. Customs and Border Patrol has increased inspections of products and personal items brought into the U.S from affected countries.

Disease Resources

- USDA APHIS | African Swine Fever (ASF)
- Swine Health Information Center
- Secure Pork Supply Plan

Special Features of this Issue:

- *Expect a Spike in Hurricane Days Through Mid-October*
- *Large Animal Emergency Training from the University of Florida*
- *SART Hosts Second Virtual Florida Animal Carcass Management Working Group Meeting of 2021*

"We are asking you, our partners in the agricultural industry to increase your on-farm biosecurity, report any sick swine suspected of having African swine fever and help us in educating members of the agricultural community, as well as the general public."

— Benjamin Motes
Government Analyst I
ESF 17 and Florida SART
Division of Animal Industry, FDACS

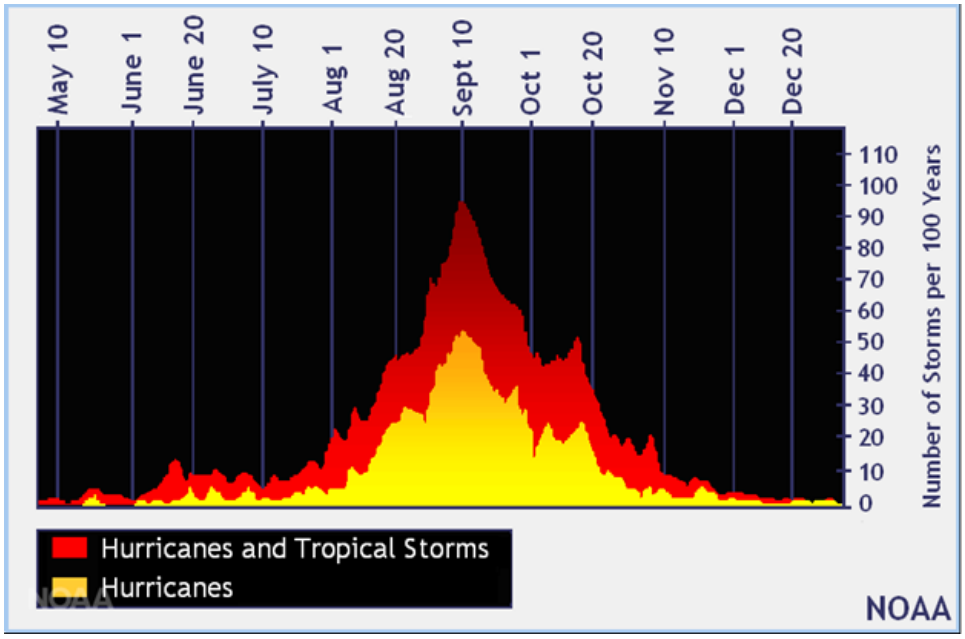
Expect a Spike in Hurricane Days Through Mid-October

From mid-August through mid-October, tropical system activity spikes, accounting for 78% of the tropical storm days, 87% of the category 1 and 2 hurricane days (Saffir-Simpson Hurricane Wind Scale), and a whopping 96% of the major (category 3, 4 and 5) hurricane days.

Why does this peak period of activity begin so deep into summer? There certainly is no lack of disturbances throughout the entire six-month hurricane season. Tropical waves are coming off the coast of Africa roughly every three days, and the very early and late parts of the year provide additional types of potential seedlings. What's different, though, is the environment that these potential tropical cyclones tend to encounter. **Both dynamics (wind factors) and thermodynamics (temperature and moisture) play a role.**

Wind shear, which can tear disturbances apart before they strengthen, is strong in May, but gradually fades through June and July, reaching a minimum by mid to late August. This minimum in the shear combines with favorable thermodynamics – ocean temperatures in the deep tropics that increase with each day of summer sun, warmer air temperatures, and increasing atmospheric moisture. **When the dynamics and thermodynamics are in sync**, as they often are from mid-August through early October, disturbances like African tropical waves can easily strengthen.

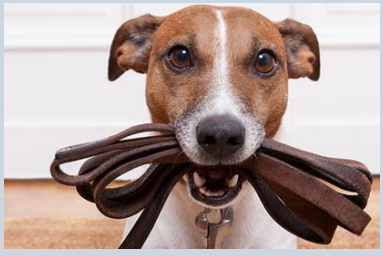
The statistical peak day of the hurricane season – the day you are most likely to find a tropical cyclone somewhere in the Atlantic basin – is September 10th.



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 Benjamin Motes at Benjamin.Motes@FDACS.gov or LeiAnna Tucker at LeiAnna.Tucker@FDACS.gov.



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). This training is state-certified by the Florida Division of Emergency Management (Course Code FL-017).

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 state-certified Certificate of Completion.

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

SART Spotlight: UF Veterinary Emergency Treatment Service Video Series

This summer, the UF/IFAS Center for Public Issues Education (PIE Center) partnered with the UF College of Veterinary Medicine and the Veterinary Emergency Treatment Service (UF VETS) Team to put together a series of short videos to prepare animal owners and caretakers for disasters and emergency situations.

The first video, which is part of the Florida Extension Disaster Education Network (EDEN) Readiness series, features Dr. Larry Garcia, Clinical Assistant Professor in Shelter Medicine and Surgery at the UF College of Veterinary Medicine and Medical Director for the UF VETS team. This video goes over key principles of creating a disaster plan that includes your pet, such as vaccination, identification, supplies, and evacuating, which owners should know before an emergency.

The second video highlights a large animal rescue training from UF VETS led by Brandi Phillips, UF VETS Animal Technical Rescue Branch Director. At the training, participants from the UF Large Animal Hospital were trained on safely handling large animals such as horses that arrive at the facility to prevent injury to people involved or further injury to the animal. This video provides an idea of what the training entails and includes tips on better preparing for large animal emergencies.

Both videos are available now on the UF/IFAS PIE Center's YouTube channel.

For more information, visit: http://ufvets.com

UF College of Veterinary Medicine
UNIVERSITY of FLORIDA

SART Hosts Second Virtual Florida Animal Carcass Management Working Group Meeting of 2021

The Florida Animal Carcass Management Working Group (ACMWG) met virtually on August 18, 2021. Attendees of the meeting were representatives of the Florida Department of griculture and Consumer Services (FDACS) Division of Animal Industry, Office of Agricultural Water Policy and Forestry, Department of Health, Department of Environment Protection, USDA, and other external agencies. These stakeholders would be tasked with assisting in the disposal of animal carcasses following a large-scale animal disease event in Florida.

The working group held a mini workshop to review the draft Standard Operating Guideline (SOG) for Off-Site Carcass Disposal, listened to a presentation from the USDA on current response and enhanced mitigation efforts for African Swine Fever, and received an update from the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission on their preparedness efforts for the recent-acquired Mobile Incinerator for animal carcasses and Chronic Wasting Disease. Additionally, members of the ACMWG were briefed on their expected involvement in the Foreign Animal Disease Southern Functional Exercise (FAD SAFE) taking place on November 15th-18th, 2021. The USDA sponsored foreign animal disease exercise will test Florida's ability to respond to a Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) outbreak. Due to the deadly nature of FMD, it is expected that the expertise of the ACMWG will be called upon to work through carcass disposal challenges during the exercise.

Registration Open for FLSARC Trainings

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.

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 1 Courses

- September 13-15, Awareness (Level 1): Register Here

Operations Level 2 Courses

- September 25-26: Operations (Level 2): Register Here

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

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
- Southern Coastal Center for Agriculture Health and Safety COVID-19 Vaccine Communication Toolkit: http://www.sccahs.org/index.php/covid-19-vaccine

Did you know that every year the University of Florida's Maddie's Shelter Medicine Program is tasked with providing pre and post storm disaster assistance to shelters around the state of Florida? UF coordinates with the statewide disaster response system even before the storm hits to start assessing needs and coordinating assistance.

How We Help

- Coordinate pre-storm evacuation of shelter animals to other lifesaving organizations, outside the area of the impact
- Coordinate post-storm evacuation to make room for lost pets impacted by the storm
- Coordination of medical supplies, food cages and transportation
- Link to funding for emergency grants

Hurricanes are unpredictable, so we need to prepare. One critical piece is moving animals out of the shelter in order to make room for post storm victims. The UF team has been essential in coordinating these transport efforts during Hurricanes Irma, Maria, and Michael.

To be effective, we need an emergency contact from every shelter *before* a threat is looming.

Please follow the link to our form below to provide your shelter's point of contact, a direct line for that contact, a cell phone number and a social media/messenger connection. Why a cell phone and messenger contact? Trying to call a main shelter line during a hurricane when there is often power outages and shelter closings does not help you get the resources and assistance you need. Even cell phone service can be interrupted but social media seems to stay online more consistently. There's no need to worry, we aren't going to call just to catch up...hurricanes are serious business. Help us help you! Your contact information will be held strictly confidential.

PLEASE COMPLETE OUR EMERGENCY CONTACT FORM!

THEN VISIT OUR WEBSITE

UF | Maddie's® Shelter Medicine Program

CONSIDER ADDING A FUEL PLAN TO YEARLY HURRICANE PREPARATION

Surges in consumer demand due to hurricanes can cause disruptions in Florida's fuel distribution system. Early preparation by consumers will reduce the strain on fuel distribution and will help ensure that fuel is available as needed.

SOME TIPS

- Keep all vehicles at least half full during hurricane season.
- Keep at least one vehicle filled with gasoline once the earliest predictions indicate a storm may threaten the state.
- Pre-purchase fuels (LP gas and gasoline) for generators at the start of hurricane season.
- Use gasoline fuel stabilizer to keep gasoline fresh and ready to use when it is needed.
- Properly stored fuels can be safely stored throughout hurricane season, and can be transferred into vehicles for use, should no emergency arise.

FUEL SAFETY

- Refill fuel containers on the ground, not in the truck bed or trunk.
- Transport and store fuel ONLY in appropriate containers- look for DOT approved containers that close tightly and do not leak.
- NEVER store or transport gasoline in milk jugs or open top containers!
- Store fuel in a safe and well-ventilated location.

TYPICALLY FUEL CONTAINERS ARE COLOR CODED FOR VARIOUS FUELS:

- **Red containers are intended for gasoline and other highly flammable liquids.**
- **Blue containers are used for storing kerosene.**
- **Yellow containers are used for diesel fuel.**
- **Green containers typically are designed for storing oil.**

FOR QUESTIONS OR TO REPORT FUEL QUALITY ISSUES BEFORE OR AFTER A HURRICANE, CONSUMERS SHOULD CONTACT THE DEPARTMENT'S DIVISION OF CONSUMER SERVICES AT 1-800-HELP-FLA, 1-800-FL-AYUDA EN ESPAÑOL, OR FLORIDACONSUMERHELP.COM.

In the News

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

African Swine Fever Action Week- September 13-17, 2021
ASF is a serious viral disease of swine and has no vaccine or cure. The detection of ASF in the Caribbean is especially concerning as it confirms the virus is close to our borders. To keep our swine safe, additional vigilance and biosecurity measures are important now, more than ever. Read more from the USDA on African Swine Fever Action Week. These webinars are available to you and are designed to teach you more about ASF. Please, feel free to register for these webinars to learn more about ASF and what you can do to stop it from spreading. You can also sign up for the Stakeholder Registry to keep up to date on information.

USDA Continuing African Swine Fever Prevention Efforts
As part of its continuing efforts to respond to the detection of ASF in the Dominican Republic (DR) and prevent its introduction into the Conterminous United States, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands, the USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) is preparing to establish a Foreign Animal Disease protection zone in Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. APHIS has been actively working with DR officials to assist in their response to the ASF detection. Read more about these activities here.

Upcoming SART Webinar
The SART August Monthly Webinar will be held on August 30th from 2:00 PM - 3:00 PM EST. Please contact Benjamin Motes at Benjamin.Motes@FDACS.gov for additional information.

Florida Animal Movement Waiver for Hurricane Ida
Effective August 28, 2021, the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Division of Animal Industry, has suspended the interstate import requirements for the transportation of animals fleeing the impact areas of Hurricane Ida in Louisiana and Mississippi. Access the waiver on our FDACS Division of Animal Industry webpage, under Announcements, at: https://www.fdacs.gov/Divisions-Offices/Animal-Industry

Resources

- FDACS Coronavirus Resource Webpage
- Backyard Chicken Keeping: What Orange County Residents Need to Know
- Maddie's University is a free online learning environment with a full catalog of classes to learn the A to Z of all things animal welfare. https://www.maddiesuniversity.org

USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

African swine fever is a virus that affects both domestic and wild pigs. It spreads very quickly and kills most pigs that get it. This disease has never been found in the United States. It is not a threat to human health. It is not a food safety issue.

People cannot get African swine fever, but they can carry it on clothing, shoes, and equipment. An outbreak in the United States would have devastating economic effects on the swine industry.

Help keep U.S. pigs free of this deadly disease!

Understand how the virus spreads, and do your part to protect against it.

More info:
www.aphis.usda.gov

African Swine Fever

Protect Your Farm Using Biosecurity

What's Biosecurity?

Biosecurity refers to all measures taken to keep diseases and pathogens that carry them—viruses, bacteria, funguses, parasites, and other micro-organisms—away from livestock, property, and people.

People can spread disease without knowing it.

To protect your pigs, use strong biosecurity practices on your farm—all day, every day.

- Review existing biosecurity plans with an accredited veterinarian, and update or improve if needed. No plan? Make one and follow it.
- Make sure anyone who comes to your farm—workers and visitors—knows and follows your biosecurity practices.
- Provide biosecurity training to new workers or anyone on your farm.

Know Who & What Is On Your Farm

Don't let anyone carry disease onto your farm.

- Limit on-farm traffic as much as possible.
- Keep detailed records of all people, vehicles, and equipment at your farm or other pig production facilities.
- Clean and disinfect all equipment and vehicles entering or leaving your site.
- Isolate sick pigs from the herd, and keep them away from visitors.
- Ask visitors about recent international travel. Don't let anyone who has been in an African swine fever-affected country onto your farm for at least 5 days after returning to the United States.
- Make sure visitors wear clean clothes and shoes at all pig production facilities and farms.

Program Aid No. 2237-4 | Revised July 2021
The U.S. Department of Agriculture is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.

USDA Continuing African Swine Fever Prevention Efforts

Preparing to establish Foreign Animal Disease Protection Zone to safeguard Puerto Rico, U.S. Virgin Islands, and the entire U.S. Swine Industry

As part of its continuing efforts to respond to the detection of African Swine Fever (ASF) in the Dominican Republic (DR) and prevent its introduction into the Conterminous United States, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands, the USDA APHIS is preparing to establish a Foreign Animal Disease protection zone in Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. ASF has not been detected in Puerto Rico or the U.S. Virgin Islands, and USDA is committed to keeping it out of both islands and the rest of the United States. Out of an abundance of caution, APHIS is taking this additional action to further safeguard the U.S. swine herd and protect the interests and livelihoods of U.S. pork producers.

The World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) provides for the establishment of a protection zone within an area free of disease, as a temporary measure in response to an increased risk from a neighboring country or zone of different animal health status. APHIS has concluded that this is a prudent course of action in response to the detection of ASF in the DR. Once the OIE recognizes the protection zone(s), APHIS will work to confirm that individual countries recognize and accept the zone(s). Their recognition will ensure the continued flow of U.S. pork and live swine exports.

When the protection zone is established, APHIS will have processes in place in Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands to: restrict movement of live swine and products out of the protection zone; conduct appropriate surveillance within the protection zone to quickly detect introductions of disease; conduct a public education campaign relating to biosecurity on farms and other establishments, prohibitions on movement of live swine and products outside the region, contacting authorities to report clinical cases, and similar actions.

APHIS has been actively working with DR officials to assist in their response to the ASF detection, including:

- offering technical advice and assistance on surveillance,
- quarantine, depopulation, and disposal methods;
- providing continued testing support, including bolstering in-country testing capacity; and
- providing additional personal protective equipment for responders.

Although ASF has not been confirmed in Haiti, APHIS is offering the country similar support.

APHIS is confident that its many existing preventive measures and mitigations, along with the additional measures underway and announced today, will protect our livestock industry from ASF and ensure the continued export of pork.

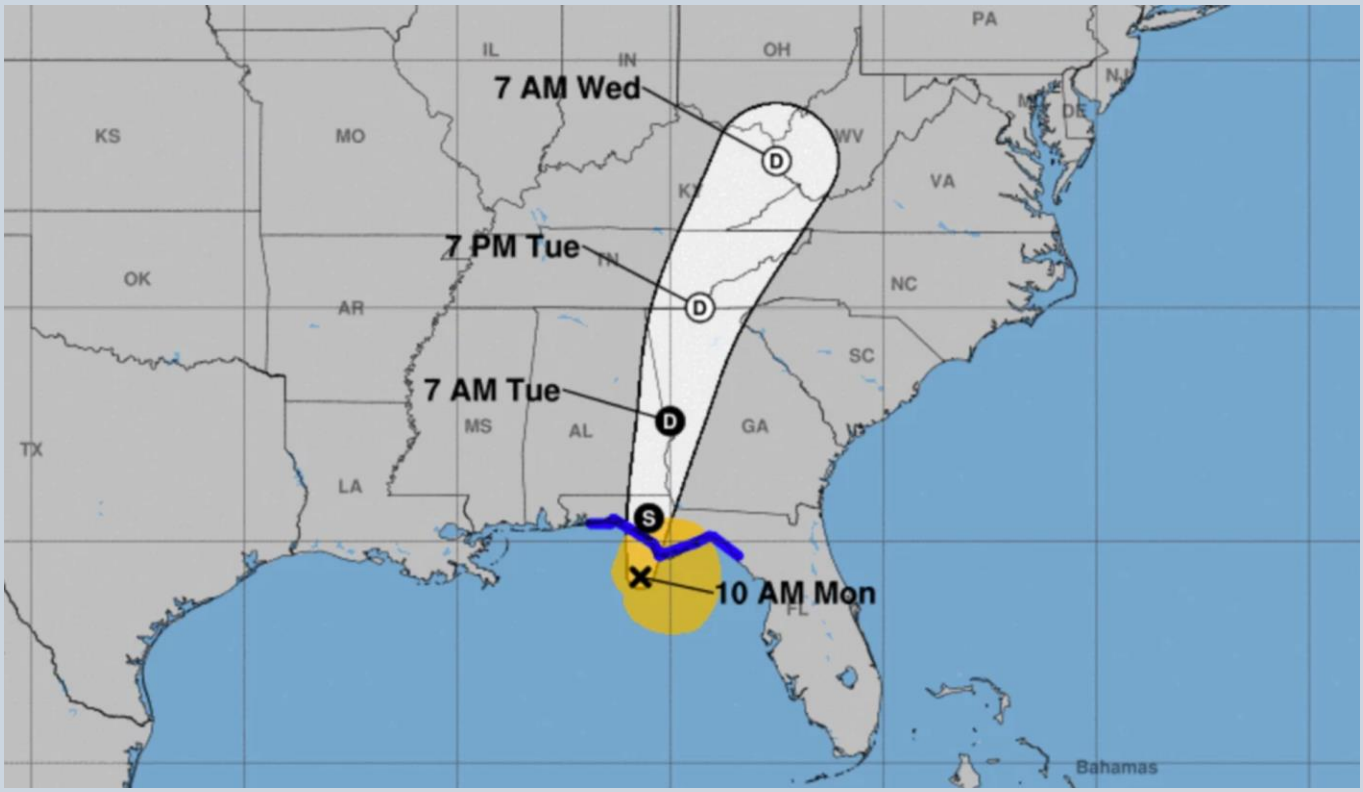
Food Safety and Food Defense Report

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 Responds to Tropical Storm Fred

Tropical Storm Fred made landfall on August 16th at Cape San Blas, Florida and headed north into Georgia shortly after. The Division of Food Safety Dairy Team completed phone assessments Tuesday August 17th at dairy facilities in the Panhandle. Some dairies reported running on generator power for about a day and one dairy facility reported minor structural damage to an awning. The Division of Food Safety Food Inspection team started phone assessments on Tuesday August 17th and completed 135 Retail and Manufacturing food establishments in Franklin, Gulf, Calhoun, and Jackson Counties. An additional 21 assessments needed follow up, which were conducted onsite.



National Food Safety Education Month

Celebrate September as National Food Safety Education month by learning ways we can work together to help prevent foodborne illness. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) about 1 in 6 Americans get sick from foodborne illness each year. Following the Core 4 Steps of Food Safety listed below may help reduce foodborne illness. Visit the Division of Food Safety's Consumer Resources and Outreach website to learn more about the Core 4 Steps of Food Safety and view FREE resources you can share with others like flyers, videos, and more!

CORE 4

The Core 4 of Food Safety

Remembering these steps can help keep you and your family safe from foodborne illness.

Clean

- Wash your hands with soap and warm water for 20 seconds, including before and after you touch raw meat, poultry and seafood.
- Clean work surfaces, cutting boards, dishes and utensils with hot soapy water before and after preparing different kinds of food items.
- Rinse fresh fruits and vegetables under running tap water, including those with skins and rinds that are not eaten.

Separate

- Help prevent cross-contamination by keeping ready-to-eat foods away from raw foods like meat, poultry, seafood and eggs.
- Use separate cutting boards, plates and utensils for cooked foods and raw foods.

Cook

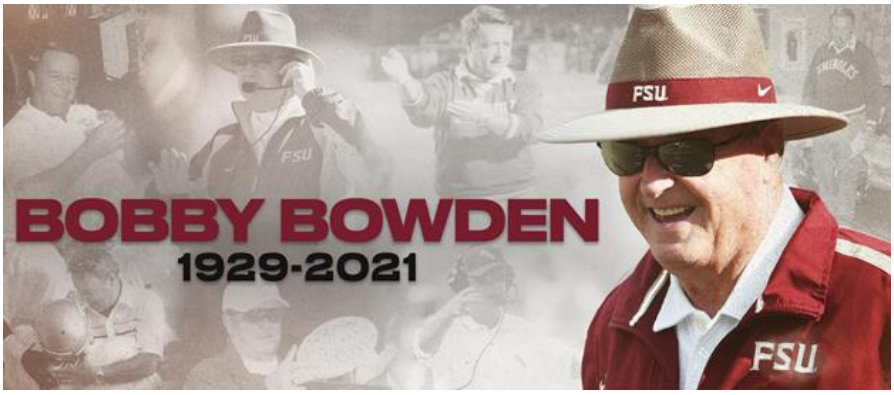
- Use a food thermometer to ensure meat, poultry, seafood and egg dishes are cooked to a safe temperature.

Chill

- Keep your refrigerator at 40°F or below and your freezer at 0°F or below.
- Keep food at a safe temperature when thawing and never defrost food at room temperature.

Visit the **Division of Food Safety Consumer Resources and Outreach website** for more food safety tips.

In Other News… Bobby Bowden Dies at 91



Florida State University head coach Bobby Bowden passed away at age 91 on August 8th, 2021. Bobby Bowden's legacy is intertwined with Florida State University and the State of Florida. Bowden was brought to the Florida State Capitol to Lie in honor at the Capitol Rotunda then was taken to Lie in Repose in the Moore Athletic Center, located at Doak Campbell Stadium. Bowden leaves behind a legacy of greatness as one of the winningest coaches in college football history.

Bowden was inducted into the College Football Hall of Fame in 2006. Bowden distinguished himself by becoming the "third coach in college football history to coach 500 games" (Seminoles.com). Bowden leaves behind his wife Ann Bowden, two daughters, four sons, 19 grandchildren, and 14 great-grandchildren. Services for Bobby Bowden were held the 13th, 14th, and 15th of August.

Bobby Bowden was laid to rest in his hometown of Trussville, Alabama. Bobby Bowden: A Celebration of Life can be viewed at STREAM Bobby Bowden: A Celebration of Life (seminoles.com).

Read more at: https://seminoles.com/bowden2021

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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