The Sentinel

Newsletter of the Florida State Agricultural Response Team

ESF 17 specialist, Melody Belanger, highlights the booth at the 2024 North Port Hurricane Expo.

Florida SART and ESF 17 at the North Port Hurricane Expo

On Saturday, April 20th, Emergency Support Function (ESF) 17 specialist, Melody Belanger, was able to attend the 2024 North Port Hurricane Expo in Sarasota. This Expo is held annually to help bring awareness to the local population about how to prepare before a hurricane effectively.

With hurricane season approaching, it is a great time to start creating a hurricane preparation plan for your home. A wide variety of organizations attended the North Port Hurricane Expo to provide hurricane readiness information as well as information about how one could volunteer to aid in post-storm recovery.

Persons with pets received vital information from ESF 17 and the Florida State Agricultural Response Team (SART) on how to prepare animals for any type of severe weather or emergency events. This information was provided via Animal Go Kits printed from the SART Disaster Preparedness Guide, dog and cat checklists from FEMA, Mental Health information, and Pet-Friendly Sheltering Training information. Anyone who owns animals should have an emergency plan for when disaster strikes your neighborhood.

For more information about emergency planning for your pets check out the Florida Disaster Preparedness Guide on the Florida SART Webpage.

Special Features of this Issue:

- *ICS Training Opportunities and Recommendations*
- *Florida Dairy Severe Weather Preparedness*
- *SART Partners Discuss Farmer Recovery Center with FEMA Administrator*

Last month, Dr. Christa Court and Dr. Angie Lindsey represented UF/IFAS Extension at a meeting with FEMA Administrator Deanne Criswell.

Dr. Christa Court
Director, UF/IFAS Economic Impact Analysis Program
Story on page 7.

Incident Command System (ICS) Training Opportunities and Recommendations

During the last monthly SART meeting, a few recommendations for training were given to SART representatives and ESF 17 staff. The recommended trainings (IS-289 and IS-2900) were from the Emergency Management Institute Independent Study course list. Neither of these courses will make you an expert in the covered topics, however, these courses will give you a better understanding of how to work with or as a Voluntary Agency Liaison, and the big-picture goals of the National Disaster Recovery Framework. The best part is these courses are all self-paced, free, online, and can be completed within three hours. Both courses can be found here.

If you want a deeper dive or are just curious about some other emergency management topics, consider visiting the Emergency Management Institute's (EMI) website. Under the Independent Study section, you will find over 200 courses that may be helpful for you to learn more about your role as a SART member. They cover a bevy of topics ranging from animals in disasters to overviews of the various national response frameworks and everything in between. Make sure you plan accordingly. Some of the courses can be completed in as little as half an hour while others may take four hours or longer.

EMI periodically updates these courses, adds new courses, and retires old/irrelevant ones. It's a good idea to check the site occasionally for those updates. As mentioned earlier, these courses are all free and all self-paced. It is never too late to gain more training on Emergency Management topics.

For more information, please visit: https://training.fema.gov

Florida Dairy Severe Weather Preparedness

The last four major hurricanes to make landfall in Florida (Irma, Michael, Ian, and Idalia) have all impacted the heart of Florida's dairy industry, costing dairy farmers millions of dollars in damage and losses. As we prepare for this year's hurricane season, we want to encourage Florida's agricultural communities to think about how they can be more resilient in the face of severe weather. The most recent hurricane to hit Florida, Hurricane Idalia, caused damage to 22 dairy farms in North Florida. Production losses associated with animal operations (beef and dairy cattle, etc.) and producers of animal products (milk, eggs, honey) are estimated at $30.9 million - $123.4 million because of damaged fencing, damaged livestock sheds (barns, poultry houses, etc.) and watering points, and widespread power outages and loss of feed. For example, dairy operations can experience production losses from a combination of stored milk that has to be dumped due to power losses and resultant losses in refrigeration, skipped milkings, and drops in milk production (2023, UF IFAS, Preliminary Assessment of Agricultural Losses and Damages Resulting from Hurricane Idalia).

Photo credit: Ray Hodge – United Dairy Farmers of Florida

Severe weather in Florida is not limited to just Hurricane Season, so it is always a good time to think about the ways you can help your facility to have a faster recovery after the storm. In the dairy industry, having the power to continue to collect milk from the cows and then store the milk safely until it can be moved into the food supply is very important to the farm's continuity of operations. Generators and other forms of power such as solar are recommended by industry groups and other organizations to keep the dairy functioning and best practices for animal care of the dairy cows. Coordinating with your supporting dairy agency such as Southeast Milk and United Dairy Farmers, is a good way to receive any needed aid after the storm. Funds are also a big need for dairy farmers as they look to rebuild structures after the storm, coordinating with the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS) as well as the United States Department of Agriculture – Farm Service Agency, can be great places to start when looking to apply for supplemental funding to aid in a facilities recovery effort.

Before the storm hits be sure to check out the Florida Disaster Preparedness Guide (pages 36- 39) and the Dairy Emergency Preparedness Resources page on the SART website by clicking here. The Dairy Emergency Preparedness Resources page includes informational documents such as the Dairy Farm Emergency Information Sheet, the Hurricane Preparedness Checklist for Dairy Producers/Processors, and the Dairy Hurricane Preparedness Presentation by FDACS, all of which provide valuable information to better prepare your dairy farm for the next severe weather event.

Source Material:
United Dairy Farmers of Florida (uniteddairyfarmersfl.com)
Dairy Cooperative | Southeast Milk, INC
Florida SART - Dairy Emergency Preparedness Resources

FDACS ESF 17 and Agricultural Law Enforcement Team Attend Complex Coordinated Terrorist Attack Tabletop Exercises

In April and May, the Regional Domestic Security Task Forces (RDSTF) and the Florida Division of Emergency Management (FDEM) held a series of Complex Coordinated Terrorist Attack Tabletop Exercises (TTX) to enhance the State of Florida's emergency preparedness against a terrorist attack. The Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE) and FDEM coordinated the exercise to assess the effectiveness of terrorism response plans and protocols by the RDSTF, counties, state agencies, and its partners in law enforcement, fire, emergency management, and health. Eight TTXs were held at multiple venues across the state. Attendees from FDACS ESF 17 included Steve Hildebrandt with the Division of Plant Industry, Major Ben Burns and Chief Keith Klofper with the FDACS Office of Agricultural Law Enforcement, Kevin See of Food Safety, and LeiAnna Moorhead, Emily Nolen, and Josh Wells with the Division of Animal Industry.

Over 100 participants from different ESF agencies/departments participated in the exercise. There were representatives from Fire, Hazardous Materials, Urban Search & Rescue, Law Enforcement, Special Weapons and Tactics, Explosive Ordnance Disposal, Public Safety, federal partners, Agriculture, Health, Medical, Emergency Medical Services, Schools, Critical Infrastructure, Cyber, and Emergency Management.

The TTX scenarios covered complex coordinated terrorist attack involving explosions, chemical threats, infrastructure damage, hostage situations, agricultural disruptions, and more. The multiple events were intended to test personnel, equipment, response times, communication, and intelligence sharing. Once the scenarios were introduced each of the groups discussed what their responses would include and then presented those ideas to the entire group.

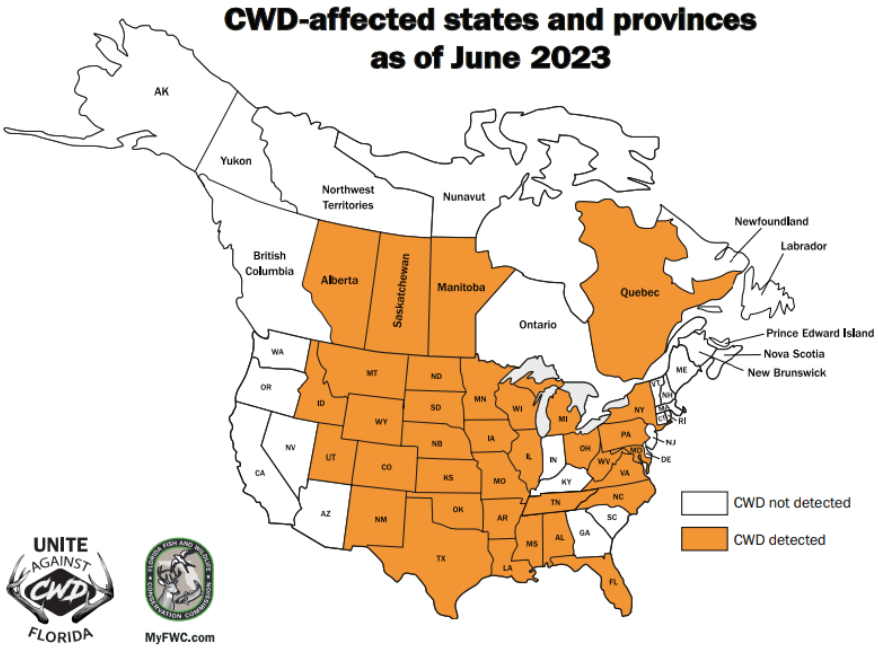
Read more about the RDSTFs here: https://www.fdle.state.fl.us/Domestic-Security/Organization

Chronic Wasting Disease Detected in Florida

The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) has confirmed that a road-killed 4.5 year-old female white-tailed deer in Holmes County sampled during routine surveillance activities has tested positive for chronic wasting disease (CWD). It is the first known case of CWD in Florida. CWD is a contagious disease of the brain and central nervous system that is always fatal to deer. FWC and Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS) have implemented response and management actions to protect against the possible spread of CWD.

On September 8, 2023, the FWC issued a new executive order outlining regulations designed to increase sampling and slow the spread of CWD in Florida deer. Existing regulations pertaining to the establishment of the zone, baiting and feeding restrictions, prohibition of rehabilitating or releasing injured or orphaned deer and export of high-risk parts remain in effect.
If you are a permitted captive Cervidae premises and have any questions regarding CWD, please reach out to the FDACS Division of Animal Industry, at (850) 410-0900.

Visit the FWC CWD website for more information, updates, and resources.



Become a Volunteer of the Florida Veterinary Corps Today!

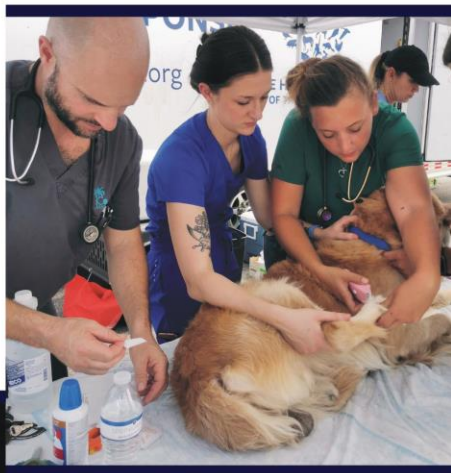
Florida veterinarians and veterinary technicians have volunteered to assist local and state emergency management officials in responding to animal emergencies. The Florida Veterinary Corps is recruiting more volunteers to help protect our state.

Become A Volunteer

To apply to the Florida Veterinary Corps, visit **www.FLSART.org**

Florida Veterinary Corps

Safeguarding Animal and Public Health in Florida



A cooperative effort of the Florida State Agricultural Response Team and its Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Florida Veterinary Medical Association, and University of Florida College of Veterinary Medicine.

Florida Veterinary Corps

What is the Florida Veterinary Corps?

- The Florida Veterinary Corps (The Corps) is a component of the Florida State Agricultural Response Team (SART), established within the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services and a cooperative effort with the Florida Veterinary Medical Association and the University of Florida, College of Veterinary Medicine.
- The Corps has been established to enlist veterinarians and veterinary technicians who are willing to volunteer their services in responding to animal emergencies in the state of Florida.
- During activation, Corps volunteers will work within an Incident Command System structure under state Emergency Support Function 17 as part of the State Emergency Response Team.
- Corps volunteers will be kept informed as to the status of emergencies and the need for volunteers depending upon the specific emergency.
- Volunteers may serve in veterinary infrastructure assessment teams, triage or emergency animal treatment teams, and animal disease surveillance or control teams under an Incident Command System structure.

Obligation of Corps Volunteers

- Corps volunteers will serve only when activated within an Incident Command System structure under state Emergency Support Function 17 as part of the State Emergency Response Team and adhere to all state regulations and rules.
- Complete the following four Incident Command System trainings to apply for The Corps. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) provides the independent study courses online, free of charge. The training is required for credentialing of emergency responders by the Department of Homeland Security. The courses are critical to train a professional volunteer Corps capable of responding as part of the state Emergency Support Function 17 and State Emergency Response Team.
  - IS-100.C: Introduction to the Incident Command System (ICS)
  - IS-200.C: Basic ICS for Initial Response
  - IS-700.B: An Introduction to the National Incident Management System (NIMS)
  - IS-800.D: National Response Framework, An Introduction
- Corps volunteers will only be activated in response to specific emergency situations and may decline service at any time.

Rationale

- Protecting animal agriculture and household pets in Florida begins locally and requires cooperation, participation, and partnership.
- Federal or other outside assistance to deal with an animal disease emergency may not be available for hours or days.
- Animal agriculture in Florida is highly vulnerable to severe disruption and financial loss through natural disasters and exotic or zoonotic diseases.
- Counties and state agencies must be prepared to respond to animal disasters through planning and identification of human and material resources.
- Natural disasters are unpredictable and cannot be prevented.
- Florida has a high risk for introduction of a foreign animal disease.

Become a Volunteer

To apply to the Florida Veterinary Corps, visit **www.FLSART.org**

SART Partners Discuss Farmer Recovery Center with FEMA Administrator

Dr. Christa Court and Dr. Angie Lindsey represented the University of Florida's Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (UF/IFAS) Extension at a meeting with Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Administrator Deanne Criswell. The meeting took place in April on the topic of the Farmer Recovery Center that was set up by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) following Hurricane Idalia. At the Farmers Recovery Center, agricultural landowners could learn about disaster assistance programs available for farmers and meet with representatives from USDA Farm Service Agency, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, USDA Rural Development, and U.S. Small Business Administration.

Other SART Partners in attendance included Deborah Tannenbaum with the USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA).

Be Sure to Check Out the FDACS and UF IFAS Partnership Video

The Florida State Agricultural Response Team (SART), Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS), and University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (UF/IFAS) teamed up to create a new video on their disaster response partnership.

Published in December 2022 on YouTube, the video features interviews with LeiAnna Moorhead (FDACS Emergency Programs Manager), Dr. Saqib Mukhtar (UF/IFAS Associate Dean for Extension, Agriculture, and Natural Resources), and Dr. Angie Lindsey [Extension Disaster Education Network (EDEN)].

EDEN is funded by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and is a collaborative multi-state effort by cooperative extension services across the country to improve the delivery of services to citizens affected by disasters.

Dr. Lindsey highlighted the important connection that agricultural extension agents have throughout the State of Florida. "We learn so much from our Extension agents and the work that they're already doing throughout the state and the work that they do within their own communities for disaster preparedness, recovery, and response," said Dr. Lindsey.

To view the video for yourself, and to like or comment, please visit:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SI1Xsjd-FCw

African Swine Fever Update

In 2021, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced the detection of African Swine Fever (ASF) in the Dominican Republic (Announcement below). ASF is a deadly pig disease that spreads rapidly and affects domestic and wild swine. While not a threat to human health, the virus could devastate America's swine, pork industry, and food supply. Whatever pigs mean to you—your livelihood or a pet—we're all in it together. Protect our swine and keep the disease out of the United States. 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 of ASF 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.

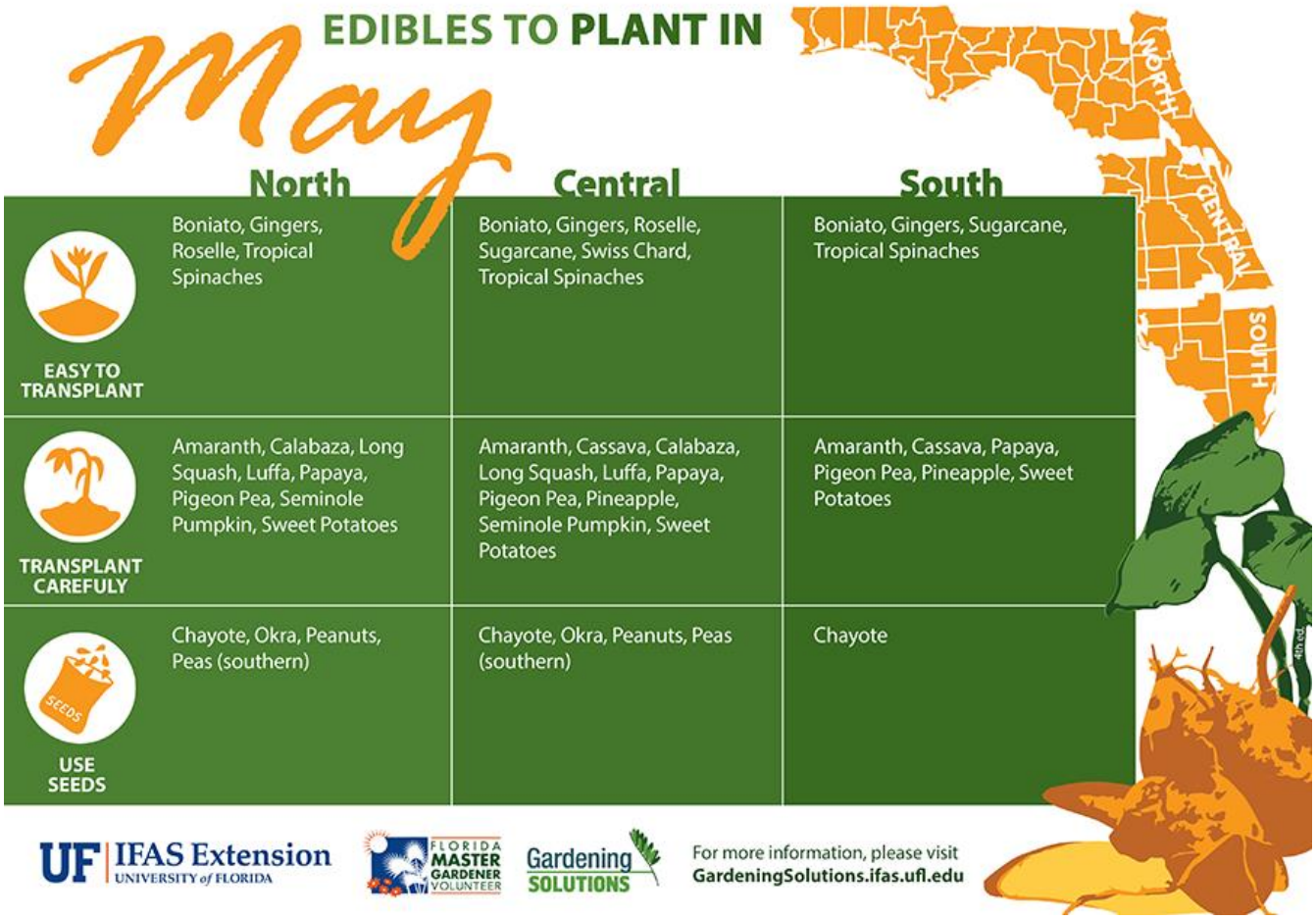
Photo Credit: USDA APHIS Foreign Animal Disease Diagnostic Laboratory at the Plum Island Animal Disease Center

It is important to note that 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 Protection has increased inspections of products and personal items brought into the U.S from affected countries.

More information regarding ASF can be found on the USDA website.
Click here for the FDACS Announcement on ASF.

In the News…

- Commissioner Wilton Simpson Issues Emergency Rule to Further Protect Florida Livestock from Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (FDACS)
- Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) Detections in Livestock (USDA/APHIS)
- Updates on Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (FDA)
- Can I Bring It? - Don't Pack a Pest! Travelers Campaign (FDACS/DPI)



UF/IFAS Florida Gardening Calendars

The Gardening Calendar publications on the UF/IFAS Solutions for Your Life website gives Florida gardeners a monthly guide for what to plant and do in their gardens and includes links to useful gardening websites, all based on University of Florida research and expertise. Three different editions of the calendar provide specific tips for each of Florida's climate zones—North, Central, and South.

What to Plant in May - University of Florida, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (ufl.edu)

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 Moorhead at LeiAnna.Moorhead@FDACS.gov. During an emergency, ESF 17 and SART provides necessary food and water to affected areas to help protect animals, agriculture, and pets.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Small Animal Emergency Sheltering Training

Florida State Animal Response Coalition (FLSARC) provides Small Animal Emergency Sheltering training for Florida 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 animal cruelty cases. These courses were created and designed by experts from many organizations including Florida SART, University of Florida Veterinary Emergency Treatment Service (VETS) Team, and leadership of FLSARC. This training is state-certified by the Florida Division of Emergency Management.

Awareness Level 1	Operations Level 2
• May 4, 2024 • May 15-16, 2024 • June 1, 2024 • June 22, 2024 • July 13, 2024	• May 18-19, 2024 • June 22-23, 2024 • August 17-18, 2024

To register, visit: https://flsarc.org/training

Annual Governor's Hurricane Conference

The Annual Governor's Hurricane Conference (GHC) is May 12-17, 2024, at the Palm Beach County Convention Center & Hilton West Palm Beach. This year, ESF 17 and Florida SART partners, LeiAnna Moorhead (FDACS) and Dr. Angie Lindsey (UF/IFAS), will present a workshop on *Identifying Recovery Resources for Florida's Agricultural Communities.* This workshop will focus on disaster recovery efforts and resources at the UF/IFAS and Florida Cooperative Extension System as well as past, present, and future collaboration efforts with local, state, and federal agencies and agriculture-focused industry organizations. Workshop presenters will include representatives from UF/IFAS, state and federal agencies involved in disaster response, and agriculture-focused industry groups.

Panel-style discussion with workshop presenters will cover coordination and collaboration on recovery efforts after recent hurricanes. The workshop will also provide details on the existence and ongoing improvements to the UF/IFAS Agricultural Damage and Loss Assessment framework including how this tool is distributed to impacted stakeholders, how these results are used, and how results are shared with decision-makers. Lastly, the workshop will identify best practices for accessing recovery resources and contact information. As registration spots and hotel rooms will fill up quickly, we encourage you to get the upcoming Governors Hurricane Conference on your calendar. For more information, visit: https://flghc.org

SART Partners Meeting

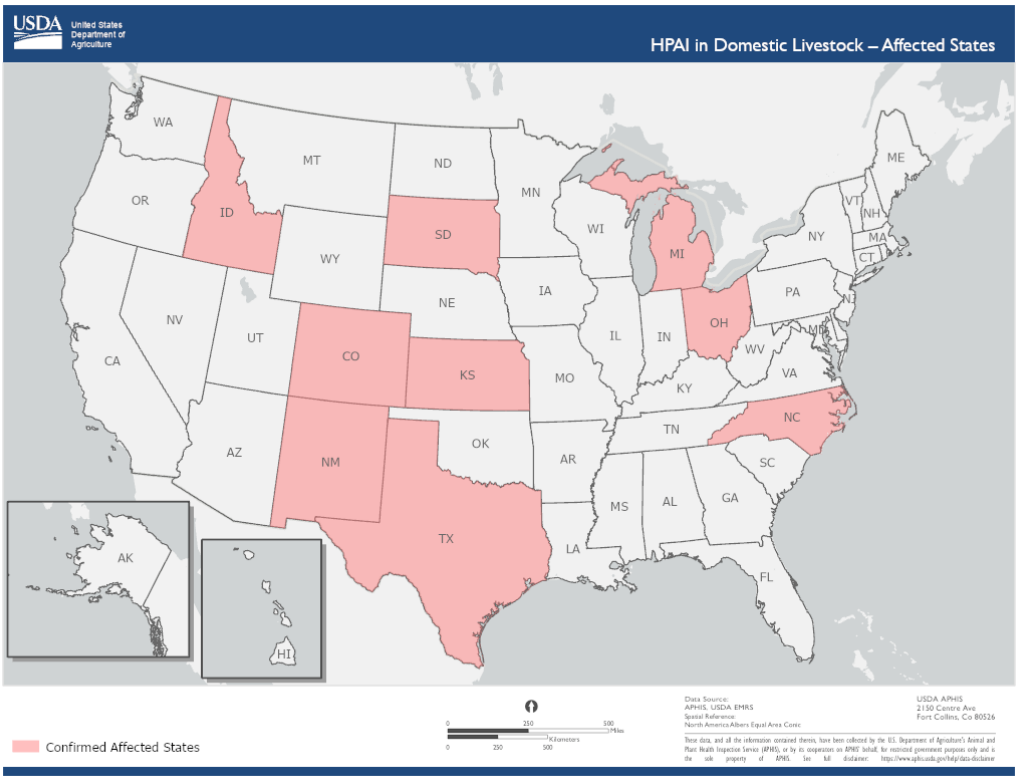
The following meeting is by invitation only to primary representatives of SART partner agencies and are not open to the public:

- Virtual Microsoft Teams Meeting – May 22, 2024, 10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. EST.

USDA: Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza Detections in Livestock

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Food and Drug Administration (FDA), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and State veterinary and public health officials are investigating an illness among dairy cows. Beginning in March, USDA confirmed the detection Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) amongst some domestic dairy herds.

HPAI is a disease that is highly contagious and often deadly in poultry, caused by highly pathogenic avian influenza A (H5) and A (H7) viruses; it is also known as bird or avian flu. HPAI viruses can be transmitted by wild birds to domestic poultry and other bird and animal species. Although bird flu viruses do not normally infect humans, sporadic human infections have occurred. It is important to note that "highly pathogenic" refers to severe impact in birds, not necessarily in humans.



This is a developing story. The USDA has opened a webpage and federal order with forthcoming guidance pertaining to the situation. Please visit https://www.aphis.usda.gov/livestock-poultry-disease/avian/avian-influenza/hpai-detections/livestock for the latest details.

Further, FDA states confidence that pasteurization does effectively inactivate HPAI in milk. However, "the FDA continues to advise strongly against the consumption of raw milk and recommends that industry does not manufacture or sell raw milk or raw milk products." For more information, please visit https://www.fda.gov/food/alerts-advisories-safety-information/updates-highly-pathogenic-avian-influenza-hpai.

In Florida, Commissioner of Agriculture Wilton Simpson issued Emergency Rule 5CER24-4. The Emergency Rule imposes specific restrictions on the importation of cattle into Florida to prevent the spread of HPAI. There have been no detections of HPAI in any livestock in Florida. For more information, please visit https://www.fdacs.gov/News-Events/Press-Releases/2024-Press-Releases/Commissioner-Wilton-Simpson-Issues-Emergency-Rule-to-Further-Protect-Florida-Livestock-from-Highly-Pathogenic-Avian-Influenza. View the FDACS Emerging Disease in Dairy Cattle announcement at: https://ccmedia.fdacs.gov/content/download/115892/file/2024-HPAI-Dairy-Cattle-Announcement.pdf

Did You Know? SART Offers Pet-Friendly Sheltering Online Training

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.

This training includes 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 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.

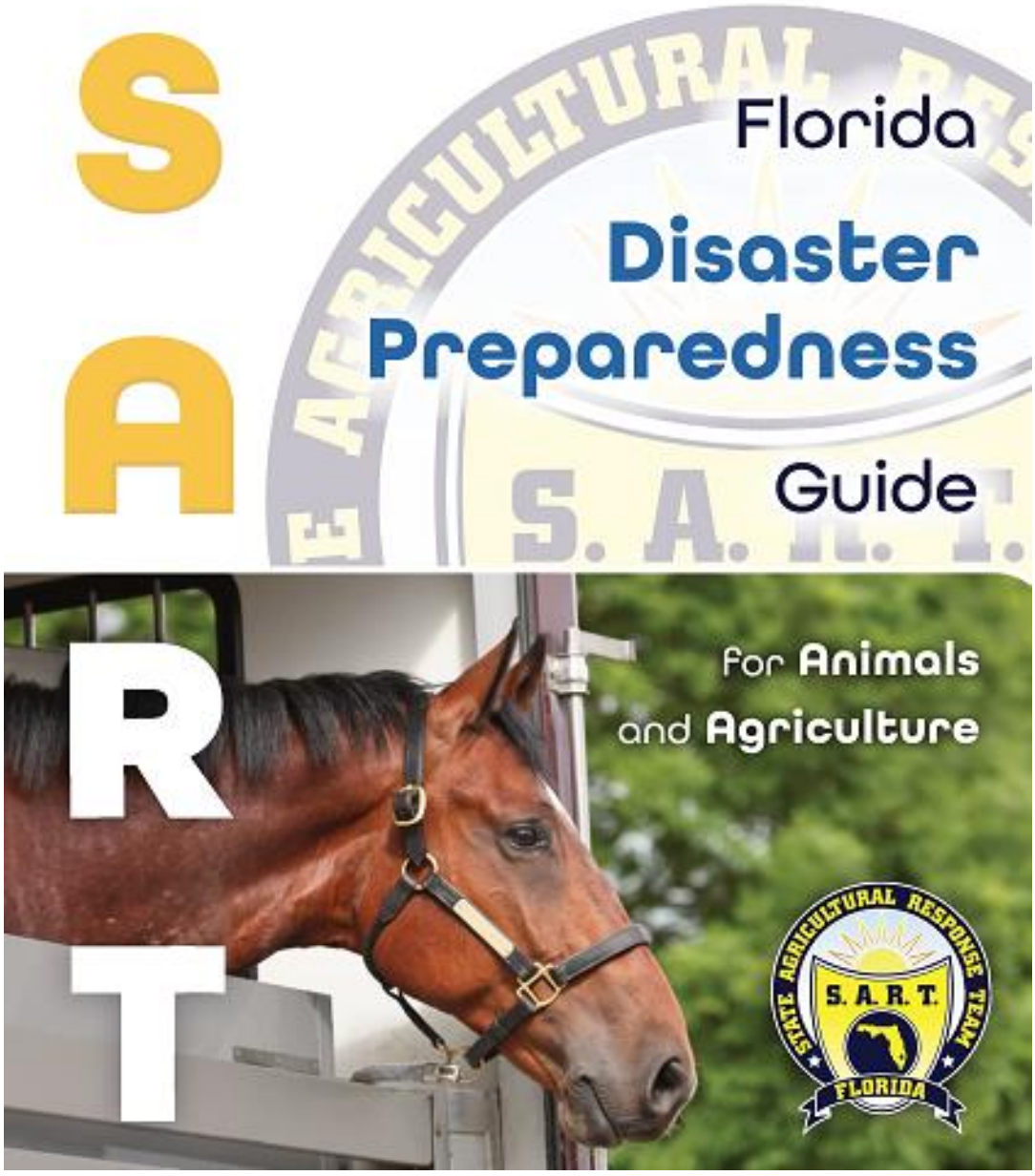
The four-hour course is designed for emergency managers, county employees, veterinary and animal services, and shelter volunteers. There is no charge for this 100% online course. For more information, please visit www.FLSART.org.

SART Publishes Florida Disaster Preparedness Guide for Animals and Agriculture

The SART Florida Disaster Preparedness Guide for Animals and Agriculture developed by the State Agricultural Response Team (SART) and Emergency Support Function 17 (ESF 17) is published on the SART website at flsart.org under the "Resources" tab.

This Guide has been developed to help County Emergency Managers respond to disasters that impact animals and agriculture within the state of Florida. Please use the link provided to take you directly to the new Florida SART Disaster Preparedness Guide.

This Guide was developed with the collaboration of the Florida SART partners from across Florida. Many Florida SART partner agencies and FDACS staff contributed to this Guide through their expertise, editing and review. These Florida SART partners are recognized throughout the Guide by their logos.



SART Resources and Links

Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza – USDA APHIS Flock Defender
https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/ourfocus/animalhealth/animal-disease-information/avian/defend-the-flock-program/outbreak-illness/outbreak-illness

Large Animal Incident Response Plan Template
https://flsart.org/resource/TLAER

Pet Sheltering Resources
https://flsart.org/resource/petshelter

Ask IFAS: Disaster Preparedness and Recovery
https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/entity/topic/disaster_preparedness_and_recovery

Get Involved! Florida Veterinary Corps
https://flsart.org/getInvolved/vetcorps.jsp

Ready Business Power Outage Toolkit
https://ccmedia.fdacs.gov/content/download/79712/file/Power_Outage_Ready_Business_Toolkit_Interactive_Final_508.pdf

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** 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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