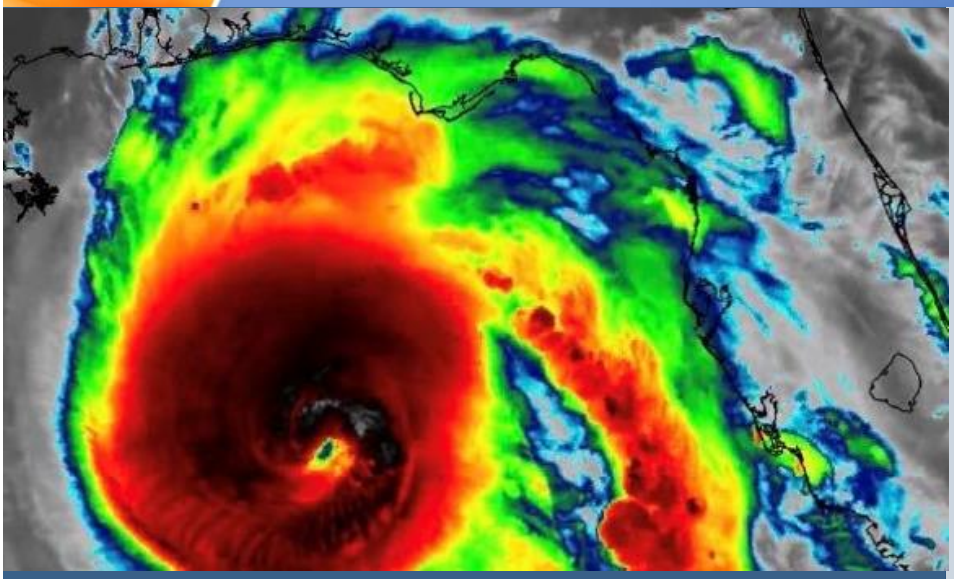
The Sentinel

Newsletter of the Florida State Agricultural Response Team



The 2024 Atlantic Hurricane Season begins on June 1.

The 2024 Atlantic Hurricane Season Is Here: Are You Ready?

Hurricane season in Florida starts June 1st and continues through November 30th. While most hurricanes make landfall between August and October there is always a chance for an early or late-in-the-season storm to be at Florida's doorstep.

Now is a great time to start preparing for the next storm. The best place to start is by making a plan for your family and animals. Making a plan can be challenging, so visit our SART Florida Disaster Preparedness Guide for recommendations and resources for creating a plan for animals and agriculture. Be sure to include preparation checklists, medical information, care instructions, and directions to your local shelter.

Connect with your county emergency management to gain information about severe weather alerts, local evacuation shelters if you and your animals need a safe place to shelter from the storm, evacuation zones ("Know Your Zone"), water distribution, hot meal feeding locations, and more hurricane response resources. You can find your county emergency management contact information on our Florida SART Website, then click 'County Contacts.'

Another way to learn information about hurricane preparedness and response efforts is through the Florida Division of Emergency Management (FDEM) website and following them on social media.

The story continues on the next page.

Special Features of this Issue:

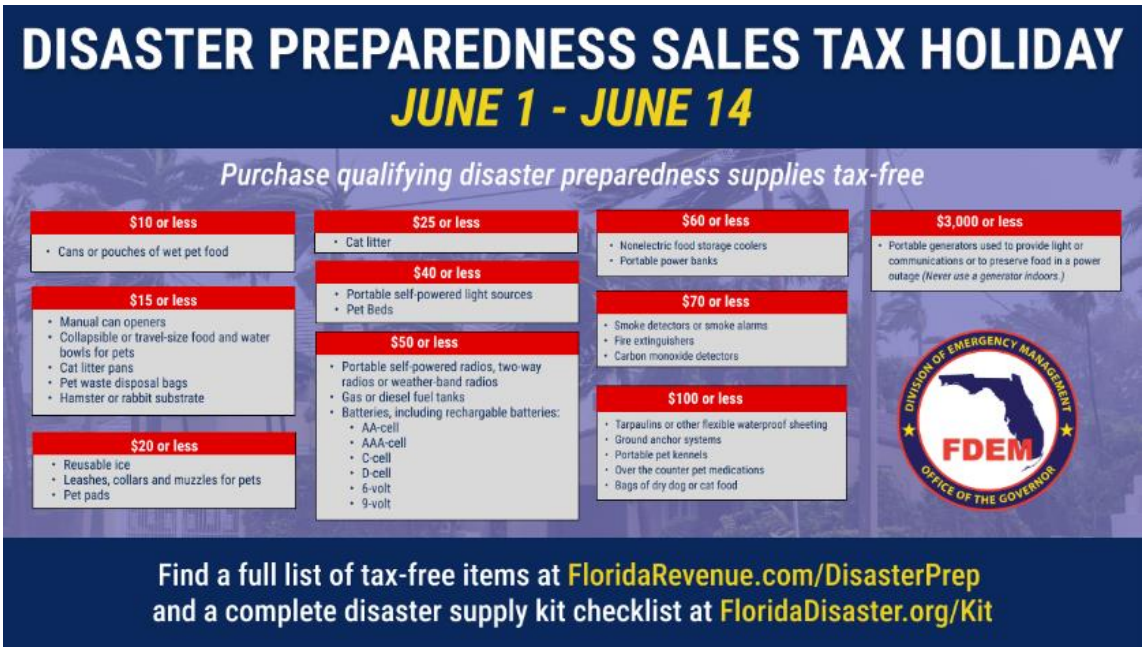
- *The Governor's Hurricane Conference 2024: From Forecast to Action*
- *ESF 17 & SART Holds ICS Resource & Demobilization Unit Leaders Training*
- *Animal, Plant, and Pest Disease Updates*

"Pet Friendly Sheltering is a very important part of Florida's Hurricane Preparedness and Response, and it makes evacuation with pets not only more enticing but accessible to Florida residents."

— LeiAnna Moorhead
Emergency Programs Manager
ECO for ESF 17 and FLSART
Division of Animal Industry, FDACS

The 2024 Atlantic Hurricane Season Is Here (continued)

After you have created a plan for your family, be sure to gather the recommended supplies to aid in your recovery after the storm passes. During the days of June 1st through the 14th and August 24th through September 6th, Floridians can purchase needed supplies in preparation for hurricane season without paying a sales tax. For more information about the two disaster sales tax holidays of 2024 please visit the Florida Division of Emergency Management (FDEM) website. Please keep in mind to purchase needed items for your pets and livestock as well.

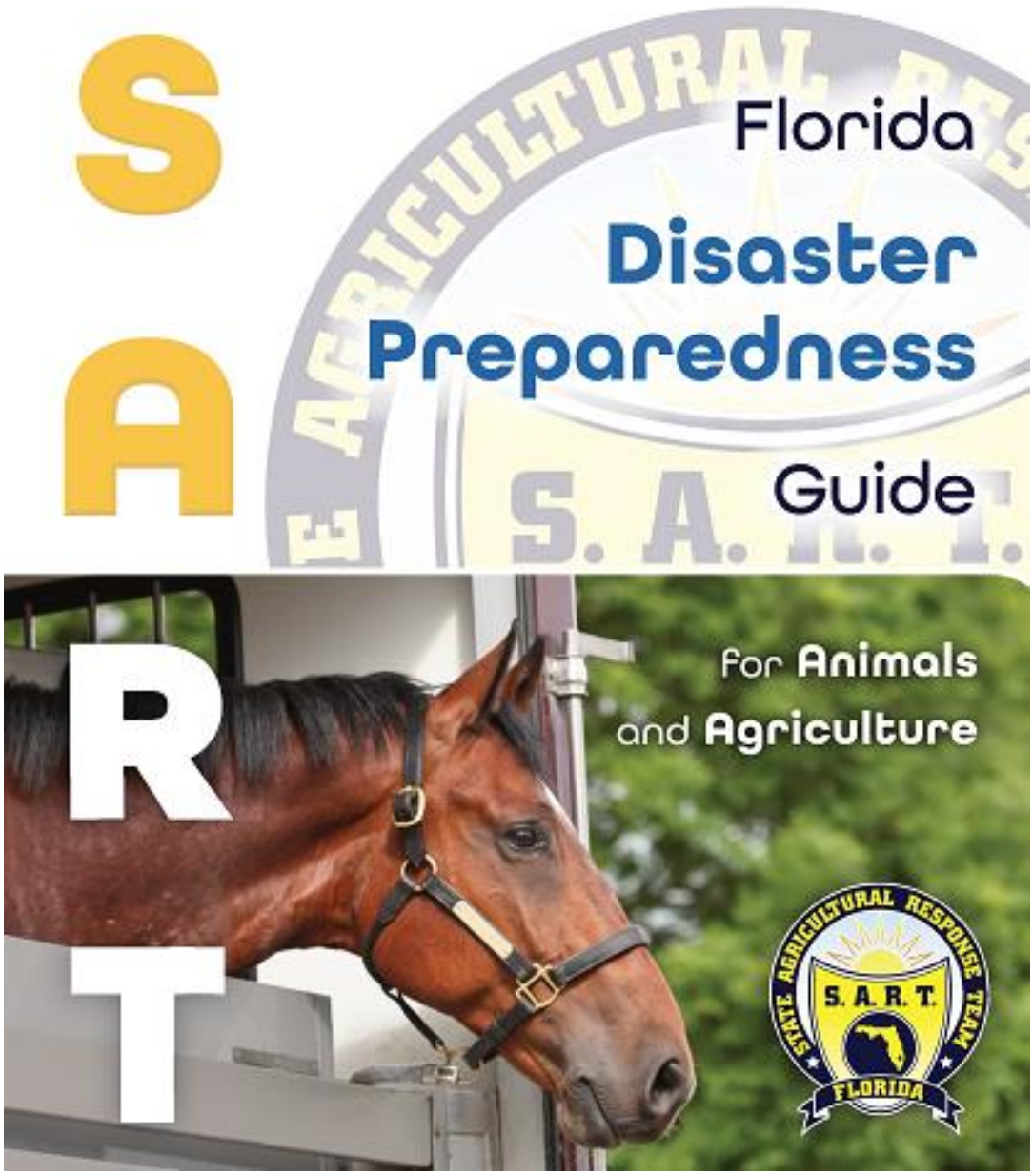


Please remember to stay safe, make a plan, and purchase those preparedness items if possible. When the next hurricane makes landfall will you be ready?

The Florida Disaster Preparedness Guide for Animals and Agriculture

The Florida Disaster Preparedness Guide for Animals and Agriculture was developed by the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS) and the Florida State Agricultural Response Team (SART). This guide explores the various animal and agricultural sectors in the state of Florida that are at risk from natural and man-made disasters, and what you can do to help prepare and protect animals and agriculture before a disaster strikes. The recommendations and resources in this guide are applicable to preparing for all hazards such as hurricanes, floods, wildfires, disease introduction, hazardous material spills, and more.

This publication is available only to SART members. To access the Florida Disaster Preparedness Guide for Animals and Agriculture, visit the SART website at flsart.org, and navigate to the "Resources" tab. It may also be accessed directly at:
https://flsart.org/resource/DisasterPreparednessGuides/DisasterPreparednessGuides.jsp



Pictured above: LeiAnna Moorhead (FDACS), Deborah Tannenbaum (USDA), Erin Jones (UF/IFAS), and David Outerbridge (UF/IFAS).

Emergency managers, staff, and private industry from across the State of Florida came together for the annual Governor's Hurricane Conference in West Palm Beach, Florida. Spending the days of May 12 – 17, 2024, in vital trainings and workshops that will better prepare emergency staff for response and recovery after a hurricane makes landfall. The 2024 Atlantic Hurricane Season is predicted to be one of the most active in a very long time, and this conference only makes the emergency staff feel more prepared for such a busy season.

Some of the topics that were addressed in hurricane preparedness included Tropical Meteorology, Local Volunteers and Donations, Best Emergency Practices for Livestock, Identifying Recovery Resources for Florida's Agricultural Communities, and Geographic Information System (GIS) in Disaster Management: From Prevention Through Recovery. SART Partners and leadership from the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS), the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), and the University of Florida Cooperative Extension (UF/IFAS), provided timely information about recovery efforts and resources for the agricultural community. Our very own LeiAnna Moorhead (Emergency Programs Manager, Emergency Coordinating Officer, FDACS) served on the panel for this workshop session, providing vital information to county emergency managers for response and recovery resources for animals and agriculture.

Now that this year's GHC is in the books, your ESF 17 and SART Team is ready to respond to the upcoming hurricane season!

Pictured above: Dr. Angie Lindsey (UF/IFAS) viewing Marion County's Mobile Command Unit.

ESF 17 & SART Holds ICS Resource & Demobilization Unit Leaders Training in Preparation for Hurricane Season

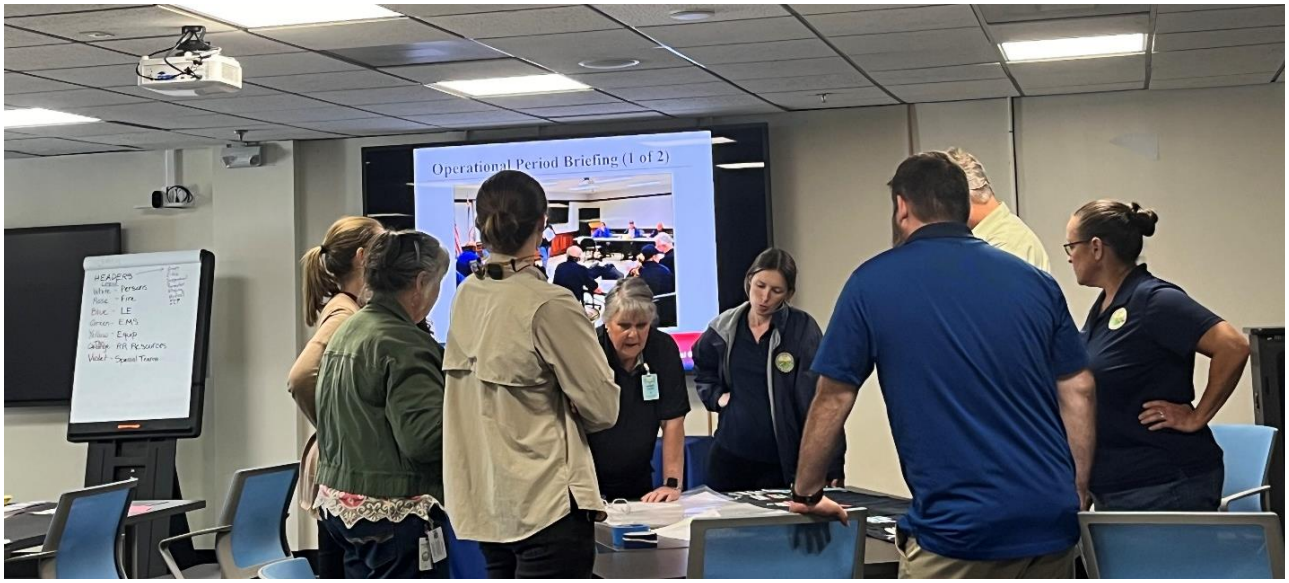


Photo: Students gather around a table to practice an operational briefing as a resource unit leader on an incident management team.

Last month, several individuals from Emergency Support Function 17 (ESF-17) attended the ICS All-Hazards Resource and Demobilization Unit Leaders course held in Tallahassee. More commonly called the Resource Unit Leaders course, the course was conducted over four days. During this time, students learned the fundamentals and best practices of tracking, ordering, and demobilizing resources required for incident response on an Incident Management Team (IMT). FDACS ESF 17 regularly activates IMTs in response to all-hazards incidents, especially hurricane response such during Hurricane Idalia 2023. Other skills taught were coordination techniques and overcoming the pitfall of duplicative work. As the course progressed, several practical exercises were conducted that increased in complexity. This reinforced the lessons taught and ultimately provided a better understanding of the nature of the Resource Unit Leader's duties and responsibilities, which will be critical for successful incident management and response.

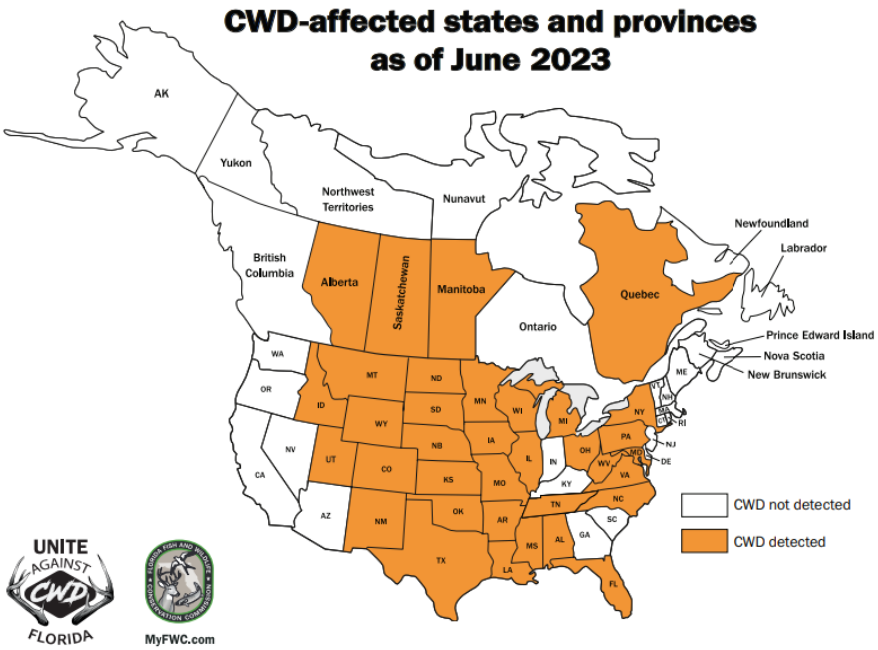
As a result of this course, ESF-17 personnel are better equipped with the knowledge of how to manage better resources required for an incident.

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!

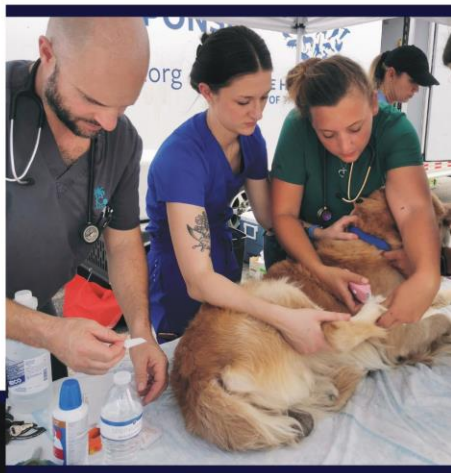
Florida veterinarians and veterinary technicians have volunteered to assist local and state emergency management officials in responding to animal emergencies. The Florida Veterinary Corps is recruiting more volunteers to help protect our state.

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**

FDACS ESF 17 & SART Partner Host Inaugural Florida Veterinary Corps Training at the 2024 Annual FVMA Conference

LeiAnna Moorhead (Emergency Programs Manager, Emergency Coordinating Officer, FDACS) and Eric Black, Florida Forest Service held the Florida Veterinary Corps: Emergency Response Readiness and Exam Prep (FEMA IS-100/200/700/800) Training at this year's Florida Veterinary Medical Association (FVMA) Conference.

The FVMA is a SART partner and cooperating organization for the Florida Veterinary Corps and its premiere annual conference brings in veterinarians and veterinary technicians from all around the state; it was the perfect forum to hold this inaugural training for the Florida Veterinary Corps. The Florida Veterinary Corps is recruiting veterinarians and veterinary technicians to assist local and state emergency management officials in the event of any disaster involving animals and animal health. Volunteers may serve in veterinary assessment teams, triage or emergency animal treatment teams, and animal disease surveillance or control teams under an Incident Command System (ICS) structure.

Photo (left to right): Eric Black, FDACS Florida Forest Service, Dr. Terry Clekis, FVMA, LeiAnna Moorhead, FDACS, and Dr. Lawrence Garcia, UF VETS Team, at the Florida Veterinary Corps information booth.

The training was customized to walk students through ICS in a method that is interactive and step by step while being an animal response-centered version of the information with an experienced instructor. By the end of the course, participants were ready to take the FEMA exams. Fifty-eight (58) students took the trainings and 14 students elected to take the final exam immediately following the end of the training, enrolling an additional 14 volunteers into the Florida Veterinary Corps at the conference.

Dr. Terry Clekis hosted the training on behalf of the FVMA and staffed the booth for the Florida Veterinary Corps with LeiAnna Moorhead located at the conference's exhibit hall. FDACS ESF 17 & SART appreciate Dr. Clekis' and the FVMA's long-standing partnership and dedication to protecting animal health and safety during disasters!

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.

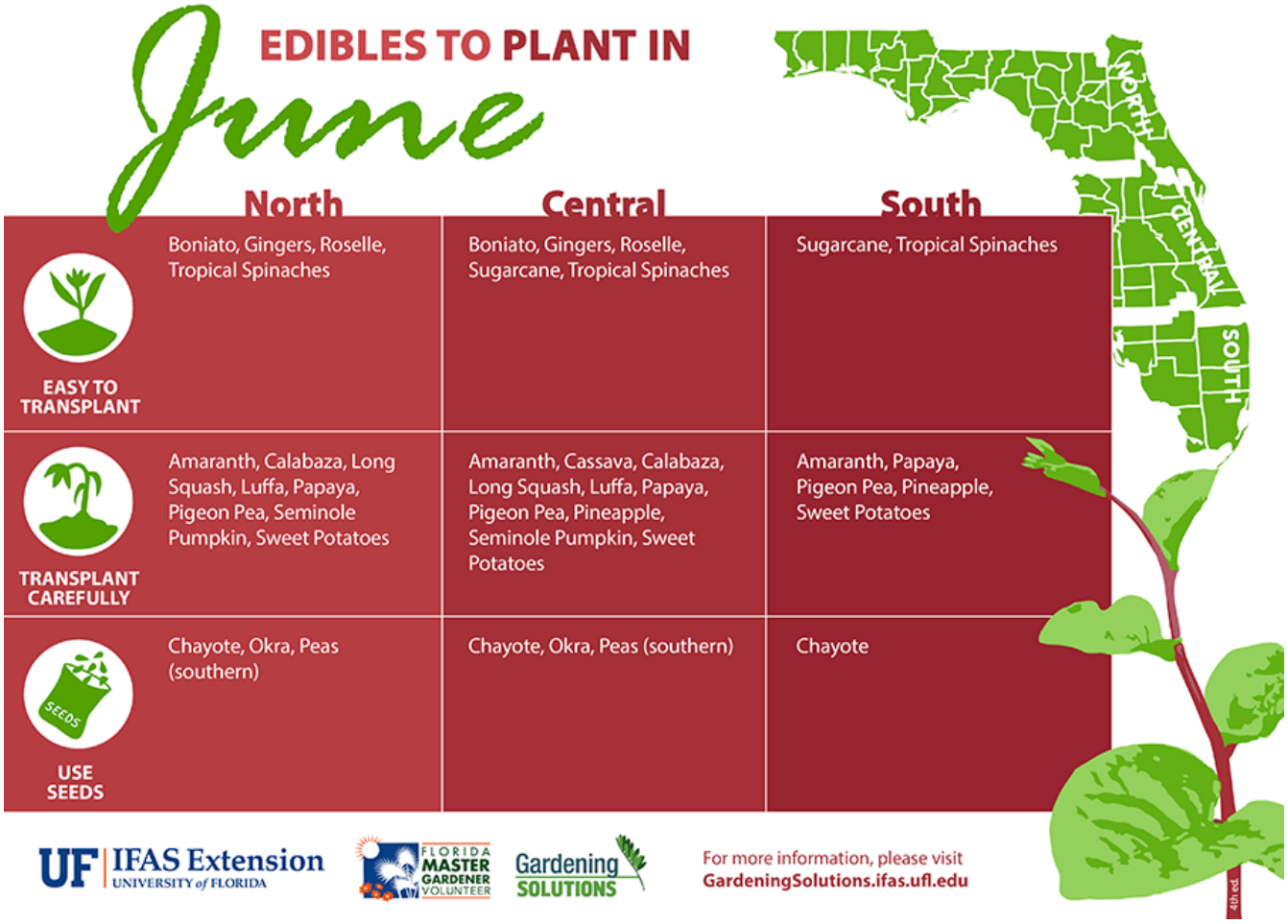
Photo Credit: USDA APHIS Foreign Animal Disease Diagnostic Laboratory at the Plum Island Animal Disease Center

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 Updated Emergency Rule to Further Protect Florida Livestock from Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (FDACS)
- Updates on Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (FDA)
- Two New Veterinarians, One Big Heart for Shelter Animals (UF/VetMed)



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 June - 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
• June 1, 2024 • June 22, 2024 • June 27, 2024 • June 29, 2024 • July 13, 2024 • July 17, 2024 • July 20, 2024 • July 27, 2024 • August 7, 2024 • August 28-29, 2024	• June 22-23, 2024 • August 17-18, 2024 • August 24-25, 2024

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

SART Partners Meeting

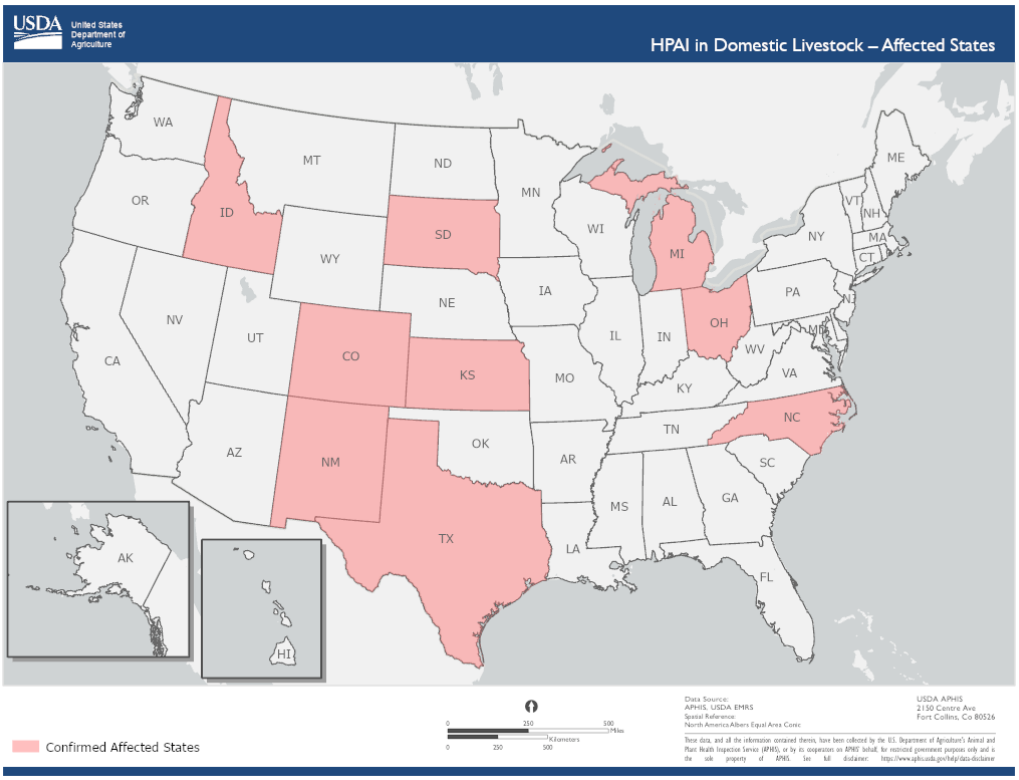
The following meeting is by invitation only to primary representatives of SART partner agencies and are not open to the public:

- Virtual Microsoft Teams Meeting – June 19, 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 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.

Accessible version: https://www.cdc.gov/foodsafety/food-safety-during-a-power-outage.html

Eat Safe Food after a Power Outage

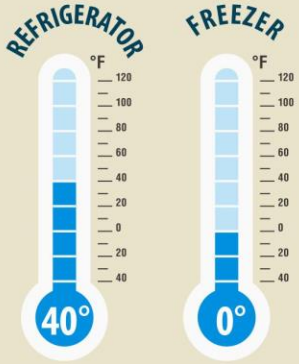
Refrigerated or frozen foods may not be safe to eat after the loss of power. Find out what you can do to keep food safe during a power outage, and when you need to throw away food that could make you sick.

Before

Keep appliance thermometers in your refrigerator and freezer.

The refrigerator should be at 40°F or below.

The freezer should be at 0°F or below.



Prepare for emergencies or natural disasters

Freeze containers of water and gel packs to help keep your food at 40°F or below.

Have a cooler handy.

Buy dry ice or block ice to keep food cold in the refrigerator if the power might be out for a long time.

During

KEEP Refrigerator & Freezer Doors **CLOSED**

4 Hours in a Refrigerator

48 Hours in a **FULL** Freezer

24 Hours in a **HALF-FULL** Freezer

After 4 hours without power, put refrigerated perishable foods in a cooler. Add ice or another cold source to keep them at 40°F or below.

After

Never taste food to determine if it is safe to eat. When in doubt, throw it out.

- **Throw out perishable food** in your refrigerator (meat, fish, cut fruits and vegetables, eggs, milk, and leftovers) **after 4 hours without power** or a cold source.
- Throw out any food with an **unusual odor, color, or texture.**
- **Check temperatures of food** kept in coolers or your refrigerator with a cold source. Throw out food above 40°F.
- If you have an appliance thermometer in your freezer, check to see if it is still at 40 °F or below.
- You can **safely refreeze or cook** thawed frozen food **that still contains ice crystals** or is at 40 °F or below.

CDC

www.cdc.gov/foodsafety

CS310309-A

SART Resources and Links

Photo: Eric Black, FDACS Florida Forest Service, instructing at the Florida Veterinary Corps training.

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

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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