



Integrity Systems

red meat customer assurance

INTEGRITY MATTERS: INFORMATION BULLETIN | NOVEMBER 2019

Natural Disaster Response — Floods



For producers impacted by floods, human and animal health and welfare are the priorities. Managing livestock and vegetation after flooding can be challenging and stressful. Pastures can be damaged and animal health may be compromised. Careful planning can assist in preventing adverse impacts from flooding on productivity and help make recovery fast and effective.

Key actions

- » Add disaster management plan to on-farm biosecurity planning
- » Request a CVD for all purchased fodder
- » Manage property in accordance with LPA Rules & Standards
- » Check access to feed, water and shade
- » Prepare for agistment properly with inspection and research, biosecurity plan, written agreement and NLIS

Planning for adversity

To ensure your livestock are properly cared for and that the requirements of Australia's red meat integrity system continue to be met in the event of a flood, the Integrity Systems Company (ISC) provides the following guidelines. Disaster management plans can be an important component of producers' on-farm biosecurity planning. While not compulsory, they are invaluable in times of crisis and may include:

- Evacuation plans for people and livestock – including locations of where to move stock in a flood. Include a map that can be provided to others if you are not able to return.
- Plans for the purchase and storage of emergency fodder.
- Plans for the provision of safe water if infrastructure is destroyed by flooding.
- List of emergency contact details: fire brigade, local council, state department of primary industry, local vet, emergency animal disease hotline **1800 675 888**
- Ongoing management to ensure that livestock are effectively identified and that stock transfers, stock registers and livestock vaccinations are up to date.

- Use worm control to reduce parasite burdens in both sheep and cattle, as floods provide ideal conditions for several species to flourish. Use worm testing tools such as worm egg counts (WEC), larval cultures or the Haemonchus dipstick to develop targeted drenching and grazing programs.
- Virulent footrot often occurs in wet and warm conditions. Monitor sheep lameness.
- Three Day Sickness and Akabane may increase as populations of biting insects such as mosquitoes increase. Be alert for symptoms.
- Environmental mastitis is caused by mud and bacteria. Monitor lactating cows and ewes.
- Restrict livestock from eating toxic plants. Implement weed control.
- Inspect hay and grain for water damage or toxic mould growth as pasteurellosis, salmonellosis and botulism are bacterial diseases caused by ingesting contaminated feed or water after a flood.
- If livestock show signs of ill-thrift or illness, seek immediate advice from veterinarians or state/territory department animal health officers.
- Check fences and make sure they are stock proof to manage and ensure biosecurity is protected and livestock are kept out of areas such as dumps and old dips.
- Check for changes to your paddocks and facilities. You may need to provide shade to replace lost vegetation or structures.
- Ensure carcasses are disposed safely, which could include burial, burning or composting. Personal protective equipment (PPE) must be used, including a mask if there may be a risk of contracting Q Fever. Check with your local and state authorities for advice on appropriate carcase disposal methods and specific health risks in your area.

Use of NLIS following a flood

The NLIS database can be used to reconcile your livestock numbers and update the number of head that are on your property. Notify the database of any animals that have died on your property or if you are agisting them during flood recovery.

Agistment

Following a flood event, agistment can provide welcome relief, offering feed or safety to livestock. However, all livestock movements, especially after a natural disaster, pose an added biosecurity risk. If livestock are returned from neighbouring properties or further away in need to assess the risk of them bringing back disease or weed seed and quarantine as necessary.

Resources

- [LPA biosecurity template](#)
- [Australian Animal Welfare Standards and Guidelines](#)
- [Farm Hub website](#)

Further assistance

Further assistance is available via your State Department of Agriculture or your state farmer organisation.



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