

Steele County, Minnesota

GUIDELINES FOR EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Foreign Animal Disease Plan

Adopted by the Steele County Board

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The following guidelines for emergency management were developed to assist staff and administration in the management of emergency operations during a Foreign Animal Disease disaster:

For more information on the use and application of these Guidelines for Emergency Management, please contact:

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I. OVERVIEW

A. Introduction.

The objective of the Steele County Foreign Animal Disease (FAD) Support Plan is to provide Steele County a plan to support the state and federal government in an FAD response.

This support plan assigns specific roles and responsibilities for a response to a FAD and outlines county, state and federal interagency cooperation. This cooperation will be essential to responding rapidly to any threat to Steele County's livestock and poultry industry.

II. PURPOSE and SCOPE

The purpose of this plan is to ensure the County Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) includes response support to an actual or impending FAD outbreak. It is a support plan rather than a response plan because for an FAD the response is led by the Minnesota Board of Animal Health and the county is responsible for support and resources as defined in the Target Capabilities List for animal disease emergencies.

This plan does not apply to those diseases proven to be zoonotic (causing human disease such as monkey pox, some forms of Avian Influenza, and many others) as these diseases fall under the primary jurisdiction of county health departments locally and the Minnesota Department of Health at the state level. For these instances, the Board of Animal Health (BAH) and Minnesota Department of Health (MDA) will be supporting agencies available to provide capabilities and resources for their responses when requested.

Similarly, this plan does not apply to animals that are abandoned or neglected and those injured or killed by natural or technological disasters. Responses to these events are the responsibility of local government. The BAH and MDA will be supporting agencies for these responses as well and are available to provide capabilities and technical and tactical resources for their responses when requested.

III. PLANNING ASSUMPTIONS

Some FADs may require only a limited response and may be routinely handled by state/federal veterinarians employed by BAH and USDA. Other FADs like Foot and Mouth Disease or Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza may totally overwhelm these agencies and their resources and will require the full resources of the emergency management system within the state. This will especially be true if Minnesota is not the first state affected and the Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC) and National Response Framework resources are in short supply nationally.

This support plan incorporates the resources of local, state, and federal agencies, and tribal governments as well as private industry represented within our county.

IV. AUTHORITIES

A. Local

In contrast to the initial local emergency response to a fire, flood, or tornado, a FAD response requires an initial rapid and coordinated state level response. Other than the responsibility to minimize the impact on its citizens from an FAD event, no authority to command or manage an FAD response including quarantine of livestock or poultry premises, depopulation of affected or potentially-affected premises and indemnification for taken animals or products exists at the local/county level.

B. State

The Executive Director of the Board of Animal Health, also known as the State Veterinarian, through the five member citizen Board, has the authority (**Attachment A, BAH Authorities**) to quarantine or depopulate livestock or poultry that are exposed to a contagious or infectious dangerous disease if it is necessary to protect the health of the domestic animals of the state. The State Veterinarian similarly has the authority to direct the operational activities to control and eradicate an FAD. He may also prohibit the arrival in and departure from the state of infected or exposed animals.

If the Board determines that an FAD exists and represents a substantial and imminent threat to the state's domestic animal population, the governor may declare an emergency for the purposes of allowing the BAH to establish emergency restrictions on the movement of people, livestock, machinery and other personal property.

Separate from BAH, the Commissioner of the Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA) has the authority (**Attachment B, MDA Authorities**) to embargo milk, eggs and other animal products that are or may have been exposed to a disease causing agent

C. Federal

The US Secretary of Agriculture has broad authorities and discretion for responding to and eliminating an animal disease. In connection with an emergency (not necessarily under a declaration of an Emergency) under which a disease of livestock threatens any segment of agricultural production in the United States, the Secretary may reimburse certain Federal, State, and local response expenses, including operational costs, such as quarantine enforcement, perimeter control, depopulation, carcass disposal, and decontamination.

The USDA Secretary may also declare an Extraordinary Emergency, which allows for the use of Federal authorities to take action within a State if the State is unable to take appropriate action to control and eradicate the disease. In many cases, states ask for an Extraordinary Emergency declaration because penalties for violating federal quarantines or other control measures may be stiffer and easier to prosecute than those of the state.

Numerous Federal agencies have authorities and responsibilities related to public, animal, and wildlife health, safety, and management. Many of these authorities include significant levels of discretion and may or may not be applied to an FAD response depending on the scope and magnitude of an outbreak.

If response needs cannot be addressed under USDA or other Federal agency authorities, the President may elect to declare that a major disaster or emergency exists, in accordance with the provisions of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (Stafford Act). This action can only take place after a declaration of emergency by the Governor.

V. Policies

County specific, to be added by individual counties.

- a. Add Emergency Notification Procedure
- b. Add NIMS Chart

VI. SITUATION

STEELE County has an extensive and varied animal industry and as such may be highly vulnerable to an outbreak of a foreign animal disease. Several serious FAD outbreaks have occurred in other states and countries resulting in devastating economic consequences. Control and eradication of these diseases consumes enormous amounts of resources and results in trade and national income loss. While it is impossible to determine the likelihood of such an incident, the devastating potential impact dictates preparedness in preventing and minimizing the effects of a FAD incident.

VII. CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS (MN BAH Operations Chief)

Incident Action Plan:

FAD emergency response operations are intended to bring the disease under control and eliminated as quickly as possible using the following principles: 1) detect the disease quickly; 2) prevent contact between susceptible animals and the disease causing agent; 3) stop production of the disease causing agent by infected animals; and 4) increase the disease resistance of susceptible animals. The following activities are used to accomplish control and eradication:

- Stop animal movement (quarantine) from the affected premises
- Implement biosecurity measures on the premises to ensure the disease organism will not be moved off the farm through movement of vehicles or people
- Initiate an epidemiological investigation to:
 - Identify contacts (animals, people, vehicles) who have recently moved on or off the premises and quarantine additional premises associated by contact
 - Identify all properties in the appropriate area with susceptible animals and monitor these animals for signs of the disease
 - Determine the possible contact between wildlife and infected animals and implement a plan to detect and control the disease
- Establish a control zone and surveillance zone around infected premises which defines the activities to be conducted to detect and control the disease
 - Define permitted movement of products and non susceptible animals
 - Define affected “compartments” within the industry and which other compartments can continue to operate with additional control measures and assessment
- Determine the value of affected herd or flock
 - Provide indemnity to producers
- Consider all options for depopulation of the affected animals Controlled slaughter
 - Humane euthanasia and disposal without spreading the disease
 - Prompt depopulation and disposal of animals
- Clean and disinfect affected premises
- Initiate the information management plan
- Prepare to receive vaccine and develop vaccination plan if vaccination becomes a viable control measure (vaccinated animals must still be destroyed to regain disease-free status)

A. Coordination and Control

1. Incident Command

a. For a small scale FAD event, Unified Command between BAH and Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) will be instituted. For an incident requiring a larger response, BAH and APHIS will delegate authority to the Incident Management Team (IMT) of MDA to manage the response organization on their behalf. In either case, an incident command post (ICP) will be established as close to the affected county or counties as practical. After the initial response, an APHIS national IMT may be requested to relieve the initial IMT.

b. Depending on the scope of the response, the county EOC may be activated to provide local coordination of resources and policy to support the ICP.

2. Lead Agency

Because of their statutory authority BAH is the lead state agency for an FAD event and directs activities at the local and state level.

3. Supporting Agencies

For a larger scale event, many supporting agencies may be involved and county emergency management may be requested to play coordinating roles for the non-technical functions of the response. The supporting agencies may include all local, state, and federal agencies represented at the county level.

4. Public Information and Reporting

BAH is the lead agency for public information and reporting at the local and state level. For a large scale FAD event, a Joint Information Center (JIC) will be established with each ICP and at the state and national level. Information management operations at each will correspond to their level within the incident response. JICs will include PIOs from supporting agencies and industry.

B. Initial Detection and Assessment

Veterinary practitioners in Minnesota have a responsibility to report any possible FAD event. Also, any member of the agriculture or animal health community might first observe the abnormal situation that indicates a possible FAD. Ideally, this observation will occur soon after the disease is introduced and will be reported to the Board or the Minnesota APHIS/VS Area office. Together, the State Veterinarian and the USDA/VS Area Veterinarian-in-Charge (AVIC) for Minnesota will dispatch one of their field veterinarians, trained as a Foreign Animal Disease Diagnostician (FADD), to investigate a report of a possible FAD.

The FADD who may be a BAH or USDA APHIS employee, will make a field diagnosis and in consultation with the State Veterinarian, the Commissioner of the MDA, and the AVIC together, will determine the likelihood of a FAD. Samples will be collected from affected animals and submitted for testing to a federal laboratory with priority based on the field diagnosis and consultation. For all FAD investigations where an outbreak is possible based on the field diagnosis, the premises is quarantined pending laboratory results. If the field diagnosis is consistent with a known FAD, disease control measures such as enhanced biosecurity and review of farm records for animal and animal products, vehicles and persons moving on and off the premises may be initiated immediately.

C. Notification, Activation, and Deployment

For a potential FAD event, notification must be handled discreetly. Rapid response is the key to early control of disease spread but a leak of information about an investigation that becomes a non-event and makes its way to international trading partners may cost the US livestock industries millions of dollars in lost revenues while the false information is sorted out. Presumptive and confirmatory laboratory results may not be available for 1-3 days from the start of the investigation. With this in mind, in the early stages of a response, local government may not be immediately informed of a potential FAD event in their geographical jurisdiction.

In many counties where FAD responses have been exercised, a group of “county trusted agents” has been identified who understand the response, have a role in providing support at the local level and who understand the ramifications of the release of a false report. When initial laboratory results are consistent with field diagnosis and indicate the presence of an FAD, BAH/MDA will call a meeting of the county trusted agents to discuss the dynamics of the situation. At this time an ICP will be established in the county, staffed by BAH, USDA APHIS and MDA employees.

D. Resource Allocation

Depending on the scope of the incident, the county EOC may be activated to support the ICP. Local resources may be requested to help determine the ICP location and to provide personnel and resources to fill out the response organization with tactical and support resources. The kinds of resources requested may range from agricultural outreach specialists to animal handlers, GIS expertise, to excavation equipment and operators to clerks. How and where resources are used on the incident will be determined by the IMT based on the incident objectives

E. Disease Control and Eradication Activities

Measures to control and eradicate the disease will be based on the science of the individual disease including infectivity, incubation period, morbidity and mortality, detection and prevention methods. Measures include:

1. Quarantine and Restricted Movement

To effectively prevent the spread of the outbreak, use of quarantine and movement controls will be implemented proportionate to the threat. For FMD and other highly-contagious and devastating diseases, not only will the infected and contact premises be placed under quarantine, disease management zones will be established around these premises with only specified activities allowed in each. From infected premises, animal or animal products, people and vehicle movement will be restricted or controlled to prevent disease spread.

2. Containment

Appropriate biosecurity measures will be established by BAH to be employed to ensure the organism is not spread by movement when it is allowed.

3. Surveillance

Susceptible animals with previous contact or animals within geographic proximity to affected premises will be monitored for early detection and response to disease spread. This includes wildlife species which will be monitored by the MN DNR that may have contact with infected animals and potentially become infected with the disease.

4. Depopulation and Disposal

Prompt depopulation and disposal of animals is critical to eliminate a source of the disease. Fair and prompt appraisal is required for the depopulation process to continue. For the diseases covered by this plan (none are significant threats to human health), disposal of carcasses and other debris generated by control measures from an FAD should be conducted using the local plan for debris generated by a natural or technological incident. **See Attachment B: Infectious Disease Outbreak, Man-Made or Natural Disaster Requiring Major Carcass disposal.** Because the scope of disposal operations may greatly exceed that of other events, mutual aid or state resources may have to be requested early in the response to keep up with the workload. For an FAD, disposal operations will require enhanced biosecurity measures to prevent spread of the disease agent.

5. Cleaning and Disinfection (MN Dept of Agriculture)

Contaminated buildings, equipment and materials must be effectively disinfected and decontaminated to eliminate the disease organism. In most cases, the most difficult part of disinfection and decontamination is removal of infectious organic matter. Once the organic matter is cleaned away and disposed of in an appropriate manner, disinfection is simply a matter of using the appropriate disinfection process for that FAD agent

6. Permitted Movement

During a FAD outbreak, movement of feed, animals, their products or by-products in a just-in-time delivery system, such as exists in US agriculture, could be significantly impacted by movement restrictions. Movement restrictions are put in place based on the concern of disease spread via transportation

VIII. COUNTY LEVEL AGENCIES ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Local and/or county government is expected to develop and maintain response plans that include animal issues, both resulting from disasters and due to disease outbreak. Coordination with BAH and MDA will facilitate development of response plans that best reflect State and Federal animal health policy.

During a FAD outbreak there will be varied operations going on throughout the county. Local/county responsibilities may include but are not limited to:

(Attachment C, Minnesota Agriculture Planning Initiative, Tasks in an Animal Disease Event for a more comprehensive list of federal, state county/local responsibilities)

A. County Commissioners (CC).

The CC is responsible for developing an adequate emergency response organization inclusive of all local response agencies, capable of providing long-term support to emergency situations.

B. County Emergency Management.

The County Emergency Management Director is responsible for

- Coordinating local resources in support of a FAD outbreak response under direction of the BAH;
- Activating the local EOC if required;
- Maintain contact with the ICP to coordinate requests for local support;
- Keeping the CC informed of incidents and providing advice in support of response measures;
- Providing liaisons to affected jurisdictions;
- Preparing situation reports for HSEM;
- Coordinating local activities with the state agencies in accordance with this plan;
- Coordinating disaster-related public information
- Coordinating government and private resources including equipment and personnel; and
- Coordinating geographical information technology

C. County Health.

In general, county health representatives are responsible for coordinating activities with Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) in ensuring the health of residents involved in a FAD incident.

Primary responsibilities include:

- Providing technical assistance for microbial threats that might affect human health;
- Providing assistance with human health issues involving destruction of carcasses;
- Assisting in providing training for first responders.

D. Law Enforcement.

County Sheriffs may be requested to implement adequate quarantine, movement control, and other support measures in the exposed zone. Security measures will be required throughout the duration of the emergency.

Law enforcement agents may be needed for:

- Assisting with communications resources;
- Assisting with perimeter and site security/access and implementation of traffic control for access and movement in the quarantine area;
- Visual inspections of animal transports;
- Supporting eradication activities

E. Fire Departments.

Local fire resources may be needed to aid in:

- Decontamination operations;
- Cleaning and disinfection of vehicles, equipment, and people entering and exiting the exposed zone. (May have to be contracted resource)
- Provide water for foaming operations in poultry euthanasia situations

F. Public Works

Local public works departments may provide support for movement control operations by positioning appropriate signage and barriers. Disease eradication measures will require use of heavy equipment. Many environmental issues will be addressed such as the potential for water contamination and location of critical service infrastructures.

Public works personnel may be needed for:

- Providing guidance, equipment and signage for re-routing of traffic in and around the affected area;
- Providing equipment and staff to conduct decontamination operations, if required;
- Assisting with traffic control needs;
- Transporting carcasses, and/or debris;
- Providing information on potential sources of outside resources (i.e. contractors, equipment, sources, and so on); and
- Providing emergency communication.

G. County Attorney

FAD events often bring about legal issues to be resolved. Potential areas of conflict may be anticipated when local governmental officials undertake a comprehensive planning process. However, not all possible contentious issues will be addressed. Involvement of jurisdictional legal counsel in the planning process and their availability during FAD emergencies will be critical to ensure successful response and recovery efforts.

H. Public Information Officer

Public information will be critical in a FAD outbreak. It is important that the general public receives a unified message detailing the coordinated measures underway to protect human health, control and eradicate the disease, and safeguard the local and state economy.

I. Geographic Information Systems Coordinator

Mapping and tracking limited access areas as well as decontamination and disposal zones will be required. Mapping animal locations and locations of exposed zones and quarantine areas, as well as the surveillance zone, will be a collaborative effort between local and state governments. Although not all counties have advanced mapping capabilities, those that have them will use them to help expedite response and recovery operations.

J. County USDA/FSA

May be responsible for:

- Assessing the impacts of the FAD on local agricultural producers and agribusiness
- Providing leadership and coordination for all USDA emergency programs at the county level
- Administering local compensation programs to affected producers as authorized by the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture
- Assisting in the valuation of livestock and poultry and delivery of indemnity payments to producers who have animals depopulated to control the outbreak
- Assists in determining locations of premises with susceptible livestock or poultry species and informing producers of control activities

K. County USDA/ NRCS

May be responsible for:

- Assisting in disposal site selection and coordination with state geologist
- Providing guidance and response support for conservation structures at or near the disposal site(s)
- Assists in the production of GIS data layers and map production

L. Local Department of Transportation,

May be responsible for:

- Coordinate resources and serve as liaisons to their state offices
- Determine local resources available and necessary to respond to an incident.
- Perimeter rerouting & logistic support
- Coordinate disposal and disposal resources

M. County Solid Waste Officer

County Solid Waste personnel may be needed to::

- Assist in determining carcass disposal methods and options and
- Identify carcass disposal sites
- Assist in determining potential water contamination issues
- Assist in the location of critical service infrastructure
- Provide web based soil survey

N County Feed Lot Officers

County Feed Lot Officers may be called on to assist in identifying /confirming livestock and poultry disposal sites in the county

The State Veterinarian is responsible for determining the method of carcass disposal based upon the characteristics of each disease. Acceptable methods of large-scale carcass disposal in Minnesota may include burial, composting, or rendering. If burial is the most appropriate method of disposal, it is anticipated that the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency in coordination with county technical experts will identify proper site locations. **(See Attachment C: Infectious Disease Outbreak, Man-Made or Natural Disaster requiring Major Carcass Disposal)**

O. County University of Minnesota Extension Services

May be responsible for:

- Assisting in public education;
- Providing aid to producer in terms of mental health care as well as physical needs during quarantine
- Serving as a liaison between producers and incident command

P. Others

1. Local Agri Business
May be called upon to:
Assist with euthanasia, disposal and cleaning and disinfection
2. Local Veterinarians
May be called upon to:
Assist in disease notification and prevention
3. Local clergy
May be called upon to:
Provides counseling services for anyone mentally or emotionally affected by the outbreak

IX. Public Sector

Private organizations such as producers, producer organizations, auction markets, slaughtering establishments, and renderers have a significant interest in a response plan of this type because their livelihood may depend upon the outcome. These enterprises will be notified by BAH or designees from when an animal disease emergency exists. They will be encouraged to actively participate in an emergency response. Their resources and expertise will be indispensable in disease control and eradication efforts.

Many activities involved in responding and recovering from a FAD outbreak will be contracted with private enterprise. Contracted activities may include animal appraisal, euthanasia, disposal and cleaning and disinfection..

A crucial role for professional organizations and businesses will involve communication. It is expected that organizations within the agriculture community will actively seek a role in gathering information from State and Federal authorities, disseminating that information to their members, providing information from members to policy-makers as requested, and providing

joint government /industry statements to the media. Professional organizations should have communication rosters and mechanisms in place to accomplish this role. The BAH will notify other organizations as appropriate.

Local stakeholders will play a key role in a FAD response

A. Trade associations may:

- Provide product expertise;
- Communicate to producers, industry, members of national organizations and the public;
- Coordinate messages and media contact;
- Facilitate government and producer contact;
- Primary contact for growers and producers; and,
- Maintain contact lists for notification.

B. Voluntary Agencies.

1. Salvation Army

May be called upon to:

- Provide temporary accommodations and emergency feeding for operations; and
- Provide counseling services for anyone mentally or emotionally affected by the outbreak

2. American Red Cross

May be called upon to:

- Provide temporary accommodations and emergency feeding operations
- Provides counseling services for anyone mentally or emotionally affected by the outbreak.

X. TRIBAL

The Tribal Chief Executive Officer is generally responsible for the safety and welfare of the members of a tribe. As such this representative should be authorized to work with the state in the emergency planning process to define the critical roles and responsibilities of the tribe. Generally, the Tribal Chief Executive Officer may be responsible for:

- Declaring tribal emergencies which can result in the implementation of a tribal response plan or mutual aid agreements;
- Coordinating tribal resources, relative to all potential types of response or incidents, to prepare for, respond to and recover from incidents in an all- hazards context;
- Having powers to suspend tribal laws and ordinances to assist in a response;
- Providing leadership and communicating with the tribal nation, businesses and other entities to help them cope with incident response and recovery;
- Negotiating mutual aid agreements to enhance resource sharing; and,

- Requesting federal assistance, through the state governor or directly from the federal government, when tribal resources have been overwhelmed.

XI. RECOVERY

BAH is responsible for the removal of a quarantine restriction and restocking of clean premises. This will occur only after a thorough inspection has deemed the area safe to inhabit. After all depopulation and subsequent cleaning and disinfection of the premises and related equipment, etc., the premises will remain empty for 30 days. Following this 30 day period, a sentinel animal (a healthy animal that would be susceptible to the disease) will be placed on the premises for an additional 30 days. If the sentinel animal does not contract the disease after being exposed to all previously infected areas for that time, the owner may be allowed to repopulate the premises.

XII. ATTACHMENT

- A. Infectious Disease Outbreak, Man-Made or Natural Disaster requiring Major Carcass Disposal
- B. Tasks in an Animal Disease Event, A Comprehensive List of Federal, State County/Local Responsibilities