

*Intended For Internal Audiences (Extension Employees & Partners)*

## **Hurricane Recovery Update: NCDA, Livestock Resources**

*[Update provided on October 12, 2016, by Roger Crickenberger, special projects manager, CALS Agricultural Research Service.]*

Todd See and I attended five meetings Tuesday afternoon (10/11/16) at NCDA&CS regarding the aftermath of Hurricane Matthew. Below is a summary of information shared at these meetings.

There were some discussions related to potential agricultural losses, but there is no confirmed data at this point. That being said, we will not share unconfirmed agricultural loss information via this and other emails.

### **Meetings Attended:**

- NCDA daily briefing with NCDA staff
- Conference call with swine and poultry industry reps
- Conference call with poultry industry reps
- Conference call with swine and other large animal industry reps
- Conference call with a number of Extension agents and specialists

### **PORK INDUSTRY**

- NCDA is working to collect information on mortality.
- Lagoons monitored prior to and after the storm, no breaches or overflows have been reported.
- NCDA will continue to collect info from the industry to monitor the issues above.
- NCDA has management strategies in the event of higher than normal mortalities and need for disposal.
- Most pressing need will occur in a matter of just a few days with regard to power, fuel, water and feed.

### **POULTRY INDUSTRY**

- NCDA working to collect information on mortality.
- NCDA network is seeking to collect information (from both pork and poultry industry) to get a handle on potential need for and timing of disposal operations.
- In the case of higher than normal mortality, there are two preferred disposal options:
  1. Either **On-site Composting**, or
  2. **Landfilling** where they will be accepted – landfilling is preferred if birds and litter can be removed without destroying the floor pad in the houses.

- Rendering is a viable option if mortality can be moved to the render within 24 hours of death; beyond that one of the other options will be necessary.
- Poultry industry has requested that status reports be requested from the industry reps rather than going to individual growers.

### **POINTS ON COMPOSTING**

- Biggest issue is availability and sourcing of carbon material for composting.
- NCDA was submitting this afternoon a request to FEMA for \$5 million to obtain carbon material (dry sawdust or wood chips, primarily) to use in composting – they are awaiting response on the funding.
  - NOTE: Nick Piggot, ARE faculty member, provided some economic impact data to their application process. If approved, they hope to be able to begin making carbon material purchases Wednesday or as quickly as possible.
- NCDA has developed several scenarios for composting in-house to avoid damaging the floor pad in the houses, which involve use of the carbon materials.

### **OTHER DISCUSSION NOTES**

1. NCDA knows of generators operating in up to 11 counties, but backup power availability is not necessarily distributed where the need is, or more importantly, to meet all the needs.
2. Since so much of the area is without power, those relying on backup generators will have the next big issue when they run out of fuel.
3. Lack of power, regardless from the grid or backup, leads to issues with water and feed delivery in the houses, not to mention issues in getting feed trucks to farms in flooded areas.
4. One of NCDA's largest issues is to find out where the needs are for power, backup power, fuel, water and feed so that resources can be directed to most critical situations when available.
  - NOTE: We will need responses from the whole community (growers, integrators, NCDA staff, Extension staff, Comm. groups) to help determine these needs most effectively – stressed getting critical situations into the assistance queue.
5. NCDA is projecting that areas that don't have grid power – those operating on backup power – may run out of fuel by TODAY (10/12/16) and run out of feed by Thursday. The emphasis is to keep animals alive until power returns.
6. Rules have been relaxed to allow farms to obtain LP fuel from suppliers other than their regular supplier.

### **COMMENTS ON EXTENSION**

- Extension has and continues to play an important function in identifying issues and needs and relaying those to the Agriculture Emergency Operations Center (EOC) regarding power, fuel, water, feed, etc. for follow-up assistance.
- Extension has been complimented for rapid and effective responses to “pop up” needs: stranded animals, unexpected feed shortages, companion animal issues, etc. Several instances were mentioned about Extension's handling of these situations and working with commodity groups in doing so, especially for small farmers.

## **EXTENSION / NCDA CONFERENCE CALL (10/11/16):**

- Dr. Doug Meckes, Joe Reardon and Jimmy Tickel from NCDA handled the technical info on the call.
- Roger C. and Rich Bonanno, NC State Extension director, were on the call along with a number of Extension agents and specialists.
- Resources will be compiled and posted online as soon as possible; the information will be shared with Extension employees.

### **In addition to the information above, the following points were made:**

1. NCDA contact to submit questions/request information:  
**Derek Wagner – [derek.wagner@ncagr.gov](mailto:derek.wagner@ncagr.gov)**
2. NCDA also has activated a toll-free Agriculture Weather Emergency Hotline to help farmers:  
**Ag Hotline Number – [866-645-9403](tel:866-645-9403)**
3. Thanked Extension staff for their actions and commitment to helping farmers and citizens with their response to this disaster.
4. NCDA food and drug group is ready to begin inspections on meat and non-meat processing plants in the affected areas as soon as they can gain access to them. No word on USDA inspected plants. There were reports of some of the NCDA inspected plants being flooded to some degree and/or not being accessible because of flooding.

## **OVERALL SUMMARY**

- Collecting information to identify where most pressing needs are for livestock and poultry.
- Focus is to respond effectively and timely to most pressing needs to help keep animals alive – providing assistance when possible with power, fuel, water and feed.
- Safety of workers (farm, company, support agencies) is the primary consideration.
- Support quick, safe and effective disposal of mortalities if and when that becomes necessary.

### **For further information at NC State, please contact:**

- Dr. Matt Poore, animal science, NC State | [mhpoore@ncsu.edu](mailto:mhpoore@ncsu.edu)
- Dr. Mike Williams, poultry science, NC State | [cmw@ncsu.edu](mailto:cmw@ncsu.edu)
- Margaret Ross, Extension area specialized agent – poultry, Eastern region | [mabell@ncsu.edu](mailto:mabell@ncsu.edu)

### **Additional resources and updates can be found at the following websites:**

- [Extension Disaster Information Center](#)
- [NCDA&CS Agricultural Disaster](#)

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