Farm tasks generally require outdoor activities. Working in hot and humid conditions increases the risk of life-threatening heat-related illnesses. Take measures to protect yourself and others on your farm during extreme heat situations.

Before Excessive Heat Situations

- **Stay informed.**
  - Listen to local news and weather channels during extreme heat conditions for health and safety updates.

- **Know the terminology.**
  - **Excessive Heat Advisory:** An excessive heat event is occurring; prolonged exposure or strenuous activity might result in a heat-related illness.
  - **Excessive Heat Warning:** Life-threatening heat is occurring. Take precautions immediately!

- **Discuss heat precautions with those that work on your farm.**
  - Limit or avoid activity during the day.
  - Keep hydrated; drinking at least every 15 minutes.
  - Train workers on how to minimize heat stress and to recognize the signs of heat illness.

- **Establish shade or cool areas on your farm.**
  - Designate areas for workers to go to cool off.
  - Set up awnings, canopies, if natural shade is not available.
  - Provide sources of water.

- **Prepare for power outages.**
  - High summertime temperatures increase energy demand for cooling; overloaded energy systems can result in power outages.
  - For more information see the Power Outage handouts in this manual.

During Excessive Heat Situations

- **If you (or farm workers) must be outdoors**
  - Limit activities to the morning and evening hours; avoid mid-day.
  - Avoid strenuous activities.
  - Take frequent breaks (10-20 minutes each hour), preferably in shade or an air conditioned area.
  - Drink 1-2 quarts of cool water every hour; avoid ice cold water as this can cause stomach cramps.
  - Wear lightweight, light-colored, loose-fitting clothing.
  - Wear a wide-brimmed hat, sunglasses and sunscreen that is SPF 15 or higher.

- **Encourage workers to ensure use a “buddy system” while working**
  - Ensure adequate water consumption.
  - Alternate work load between strenuous and light tasks.
  - Detect early signs of heat-related illnesses.

Heat-Related Illnesses

- **Heat stroke is a life-threatening situation!**
  - Occurs when the body is unable to regulate its temperature and cool itself.
  - **Signs:** extremely high body temperature (above 103°F) ● red, hot, and dry skin (no sweating) ● rapid, strong pulse ● throbbing headache ● dizziness ● nausea ● confusion ● unconsciousness
  - **If you see any of these signs,** get medical assistance immediately!

- **Heat exhaustion.**
  - A milder form of heat-related illness that can develop after several days of exposure to high temperatures and inadequate or unbalanced replacement of fluids.
  - **Signs:** cool, moist, pale or flushed skin ● heavy sweating ● headache ● nausea ● dizziness ● weakness
  - Cool the victim by providing cool, nonalcoholic beverages ● rest in a cool or air-conditioned environment ● cool shower, bath, or sponge bath ● lightweight clothing
  - If the person vomits or begins to lose consciousness, get medical assistance immediately!

- **Heat cramps.**
  - Muscle pains or spasms (usually in the legs or abdomen) that occur in association with loss of fluids and electrolytes following strenuous activity.
  - Often an early sign that the body is having trouble with heat.

- **Sunburn.**
  - Damage to the skin that significantly slows the skin’s ability to release heat.
  - Usually minor discomfort that heals in a week.
  - Severe sunburn may require medical attention.

- **Heat rash.**
  - Skin irritation caused by excessive sweating during hot, humid weather.
  - Red cluster of pimples or small blisters.
  - Most common on the neck, upper chest, or folds of the skin (e.g., elbow creases).

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For more information and resources, see [www.Prep4AgThreats.org](http://www.Prep4AgThreats.org)