



Livestock can be lost, injured, or killed during a wildfire. Take the following actions to protect your livestock before a wildfire occurs and speed recovery after a wildfire has passed.

Before a Wildfire

- **Maintain detailed livestock records.**
 - Possible indemnity payments may be based on verifiable livestock records.
 - Records should be backed up in multiple locations, including digitally.
 - Records should be kept for multiple years of production.
 - Include the location of animals and fences on your property.
- **Use clearly distinguishable identification methods.**
 - Make sure animals have some form of permanent identification (ear tags, tattoos, electronic microchips, brands, etc.).
 - Pictures of animals, especially high-value animals such as horses, should also be maintained.
- **Employ land use practices that discourage fire spread.**
 - Limit weeds, debris, or highly flammable trees and bushes in fencerows.
 - Remove woody debris piles in a timely manner.
 - Remove non-native species that may not be suited for your environment.
 - During times of high fire danger or dormant vegetation, practice general fire prevention.

During a Wildfire

- **Above all, ensure the safety of your family and yourself in a wildfire situation.**
- **If it can be done safely, allow for animal movement.**
 - This could mean opening gates, cutting fences, or herding livestock into areas of lower fire risk (e.g. wheat pasture).
- **Proactively corral animals to prepare for off-farm movement.**
 - During a **Red Flag Warning**, some animals, such as horses, could be corralled to allow for fast movement.
 - If you have a vehicle designated for moving livestock, consider having it hitched to a trailer in a position to quickly load and evacuate animals.
 - Only consider this option if you have ample time.
- **Once you leave your property, do not return until told to do so by first responders.**

- **Communicate with neighbors and/or first responders.**
 - If animals are left on your property after you evacuate, let neighbors and first responders know to be on the lookout for your animals.
- **Use emergency identification methods.**
 - If animals are set loose, you can be creative with short-term identification methods.
 - Some producers have used spray paint to add personal identification marks on animals set loose during a wildfire situation.

After a Wildfire

- **Document livestock losses.**
 - Take pictures of dead livestock where they lay.
 - Document the location of livestock where they are found.
 - Do not move livestock until approved by insurance or local, state, or federal authorities.
- **Practice safe and humane euthanasia methods.**
 - Animals may be severely injured after a wildfire and need to be humanely euthanized.
 - Work with local officials to determine the safest and most humane means of euthanasia.
- **Dispose of carcasses.**
 - After documentation has taken place, check with local or state authorities for proper disposal methods (e.g. burial, rendering, composting, etc.)
- **Accept emotional or mental health assistance.**
 - Losing livestock can be a traumatic experience. Accept emotional or mental health resources that may be available after an incident.
 - Seek out help for dealing with long-term emotional stress.
 - Understand that grieving is a natural process after experiencing a major disaster.
- **Apply for federal assistance.**
 - Federal assistance related to wildfire losses may be available depending on the scope of the incident.
 - This information will be available from your local extension agent or FSA office.
 - State FSA offices can be found at <https://www.fsa.usda.gov/state-offices/index>.

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