

Ross Pruitt, Department of Agricultural Economics and Agribusiness

Louisiana State University AgCenter

Disaster Preparedness for Louisiana Livestock Producers

Christine Navarre, DVM, LSU AgCenter

Theresa Lavergne, Associate Professor, LSU AgCenter

As August begins, it's a good time for livestock producers to review their readiness in the event of a disaster in the next couple of months. The largest threat this time of year would be a hurricane, but preparation for hurricanes can help producers prepare for other disasters (fire, hazardous spills, and animal disease outbreaks to name some potential disasters). It must be stressed that although help may be available from many sources following a disaster, producers themselves are ultimately responsible for the welfare of their animals, and should prepare accordingly.

Well in advance of a potential disaster situation, producers should evaluate their herd health programs with their veterinarian. Cattle that undergo evacuation either before or after a disaster will be stressed and are likely to be commingled with other cattle resulting in a loss of herd biosecurity. Proper herd nutrition and vaccination can minimize potential problems such as pneumonia and abortions resulting from the loss of biosecurity. The ability to properly identify animals is critical in the face of any disaster since cattle may be scattered and commingled. Dangle tags and tattoos can be duplicated, so electronic identification as well pictures and videos of cattle can help identify animals after the disaster.

Poultry producers need to monitor potential storms and be prepared in the event that they strike Louisiana despite being well over 100 miles north of the gulf coast. Proper inspection of facilities (regardless of species produced) should occur on a regular basis to make sure facilities are in good repair including electrical wiring. Prior to a storm making landfall, all outside equipment should be secured to prevent it from becoming airborne in the event of a storm. Dairy and poultry producers need to conduct regular generator maintenance checks and make sure their generators are always in working order. Fuel for the generators needs to be available at all times. A plan needs to be in place to receive fuel for the generators during and/or after a disaster. Also, producers need to make sure that they have enough feed on the farm to last through the storm and for a few days afterwards. Water lines need to be working properly, and the alternate water source needs to be working too.

There is no way to prepare for every situation that arises in a disaster. However, by working closely with other producers and agricultural leaders, livestock producers can lessen the impact of a disaster on their operation.

For more information on livestock disaster preparedness, visit www.lsuagcenter.com.

Yesterday, CWT announced that nearly 87,000 cows (1.8 billion pounds of milk) had been accepted into its latest dairy herd retirement. The number accepted is less than the 100,000 that was anticipated with CWT not ruling out another herd retirement in 2009. Producers whose bids were accepted will be audited beginning next week with farmers being notified by the end of this month if their bid was accepted. After the audit occurs, producers have 15 days to send their herd to a processing plant.

Last Friday, USDA Secretary Tom Vilsack announced that USDA is increasing the support prices for dairy commodities including non-fat dry milk (\$0.92/lb up from \$0.80/lb), cheddar blocks (\$1.31/lb from \$1.10/lb), and cheddar barrels (\$1.28/lb from \$1.10/lb). As a result of the price increases, the government will purchase an additional 150 million pounds of non-fat dry milk and 75 million pounds of cheese. The Senate passed its version of the fiscal year 2010 agriculture appropriations bill which included \$350 million in increases for dairy price supports as well as \$7.3 million for the National Animal Identification System. The funds for NAIS are only to be used for rulemaking. The House had eliminated all funding for NAIS in its version of the bill.

The House also passed the Food Safety Enhancement Act of 2009 on Thursday of last week well. It did not include a provision that would ban the use of "non-therapeutic" antibiotics in livestock and poultry animal health products used to prevent and control diseases. Specifics of the bill include increased traceability of food and record-keeping. This bill now goes on to the Senate and likely won't be debated until after a health care reform proposal is passed.

Feeder and fed cattle futures contracts finished with week to losses. Monday saw strong gains in corn futures, but this rally was not sustained with corn trading lower on the week. While cattle contracts posted some strength the rest of the week, struggling cutout values and lower hog prices were unable to spur the markets higher. Attention now turns to USDA's *Crop Production* report which will be released on Wednesday and feature a revised corn acreage estimate following last month's surprise of significantly more corn acreage than expected. With this fall's corn crop likely to be one for the record books, it's likely this report won't provide significant upward momentum for corn prices. However, USDA can do the unexpected as last month's production report showed.

Live cattle trade developed in Nebraska on Thursday at \$82 on a live basis and \$130 for dressed. Trade occurring in other areas today was \$81 for live animals, a drop of a \$1 from last week. Boxed beef prices fell throughout the week and reversed a two week trend of steady, but unspectacular gains.

Louisiana cattle auctions saw wider spreads between north and south markets than normal leading to AMS reporting prices from the beginning and middle of the week on their website (entire range is shown below). Overall, slaughter cows were steady to \$2 lower with bulls mostly steady. Feeder steers and heifers were \$1 to \$3 higher. Oklahoma City markets were slightly up this week.

Table 1. Louisiana Auction Prices for the Week Ending August 7, 2009.

Weight	Steers	Heifers	Slaughter Classes	
200-250	\$106-140	\$86-119	Breaking	\$42-50.50
250-300	\$105-135	N/A	Boners	\$34-54
300-350	\$102-128	\$86-107	Lean	\$33-46
350-400	\$87-122	\$86-106		
400-450	\$95-114	\$80-105	Bulls, YG 1-2, >1,500 lbs	\$53-62.50
450-500	\$92-111	\$80-103		
500-550	\$90-106	\$78-101		
550-600	\$82-103	\$93-100		
600-650	N/A	\$83-96		
650-700	N/A	N/A		

Note: All prices are in \$/cwt, steers and heifers are Medium and Large 1-2
 Price ranges may reflect higher prices received in northern areas of the state in the middle of the week
 Source: USDA AMS

Table 2. Louisiana Auction Prices for the Week Ending July 31, 2009.

Weight	Steers	Heifers	Slaughter Classes	
200-250	\$120-140	N/A	Breaking	\$39-48
250-300	\$108-130	N/A	Boners	\$38-51
300-350	\$104-117	\$90-110	Lean	\$33-46
350-400	\$98-116	\$85-105		
400-450	\$95-115	\$85-103	Bulls, YG 1-2, >1,500 lbs	\$53-62.50
450-500	\$93-110	\$80-102		
500-550	\$89-102	\$78-100		
550-600	\$89-101	\$75-100		
600-650	\$87-98	\$81-98		
650-700	\$85-92	\$80-90		

Note: All prices are in \$/cwt, steers and heifers are Medium and Large 1-2
 Price ranges may reflect higher prices received in northern areas of the state in the middle of the week
 Source: USDA AMS

Table 3. Futures Prices

Month	Live Cattle	Change*	Feeder Cattle	Change*	Corn	Change*
Aug	\$ 83.850	-0.850	\$ 101.350	-1.000		
Sept			\$ 100.975	-1.575	322	-17 1/2
Oct	\$ 89.125	-1.075	\$ 101.575	-0.950		
Nov			\$ 102.275	-0.375		
Dec	\$ 88.675	-0.550			326 1/2	-23
Jan			\$ 101.850	0.150		
Feb	\$ 89.075	-0.100				
Mar			\$ 101.300	-0.200	340	-22 1/4
Apr	\$ 90.800	0.000	\$ 101.700	-0.200		
May			\$ 102.600	0.500	349 1/2	-22 1/4
Jun	\$ 87.800	-0.150				
Jul					357 1/2	-23 1/4

Source: DTN

* Change is from the previous Friday's close

Table 4. State and National Market Information

Commodity	This Week	Last Week	Last Year
5 – Area Fed Steer Price			
Live	\$ 81.27	\$ 82.61	\$ 99.53
Dressed	\$ 129.61	\$ 131.63	\$ 158.36
Oklahoma City Feeder Cattle Prices			
5-5.5 cwt Med and Large #1	\$ 110.95	\$ 107.27	\$ 119.25
7.5-8 cwt Med and Large #1	\$ 101.72	\$ 101.63	\$ 113.04
Boxed Beef Cutout Values (weekly average)			
600-900 lb Choice cutout	\$ 141.49	\$ 142.53	\$ 160.94
600-900 lb Select cutout	\$ 135.02	\$ 136.79	\$ 154.39
Georgia Dock Broilers	\$ 86.84	\$ 87.16	\$ 87.79
Georgia B/S Breasts	\$ 149.00	\$ 148.50	\$ 147.00
Georgia Leg Quarters	\$ 44.00	\$ 44.50	\$ 52.50
Meat production (million lbs)			
Beef	488.1	497.2	519.4
Pork	419.6	420.2	413.4
Slaughter (1,000 head)			
Cattle	627	639	667
Hogs	2,096	2,104	2,128
Broilers/Fryers	164.313	167.502	170.594
Average Dressed Weight			
Cattle	781	781	781
Hogs	200	200	194
	8/1/2009	7/25/2009	8/3/2008
Poultry Placements (in thousands)¹			
LA Broiler Egg Sets	3,455	3,424	3,470
US Broiler Egg Sets	200,381	200,928	207,229
LA Broiler Chick Placements	23,948	2,888	3,359
US Broiler Chick Placements	166,830	166,770	172,890

Source: USDA Agricultural Marketing Service, USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service and Livestock Marketing Information Center

¹Note the placements numbers are lagged by one week prior to publishing.