

Farm Resilience for Weather Emergencies

Farm Emergency Preparedness Plan

The impact of all-hazard situations on your business can involve several factors: your property, employees, customers, and suppliers. Planning for these situations can help to minimize the impact and speed the recovery of your business. Determine the hazards and risks for your area and business.

Have multiple places identified on the farm to store emergency phone numbers, and ensure they are accessible in the case of an Emergency.

Emergency Contacts	
Contact	Phone number
Owner/Operator	
Farm Manager	
Fire Department	
Sheriff Department	
Other Emergency Medical Service	
County Emergency Management Agency	
Health Department	
Gas Supplier	
Electric Supplier	
Insurance Provider	
Attorney	
Equipment Dealer	
Neighbor (_____)	
Other (_____)	
Other (_____)	



Establish a support team to develop the business preparedness/continuity plan.

Depending on the category or type of emergency, each team member has a unique role in your operation and serves as a direct contact.

Local Fire Department – Contact the Fire Chief and EMS Coordinator, ensuring coordinated responses for fire and ambulance responses.

Sheriff and/or Local Police – In a weather emergency, they can help with crowd control and evacuation decisions. They can also direct traffic, remove unsafe customers and conduct investigations.

County Emergency Management Agency – Typically offers a range of public safety and disaster response services. They can help coordinate disaster response efforts, gather resources, and ensure communication between safety agencies.

Health Department – Is involved in managing health risks. It depends on your operation and the role of the individuals involved but they would assist with sanitation, water testing and food safety concerns. They can also be a valuable food safety training partner.

Insurance Representative – This person is critical to emergency planning from a business continuity perspective. They can also assist with documenting damage, guiding the claims process, understanding coverage, and evaluating recovery options.

Attorney – This person can provide legal guidance on liability, help navigate regulatory compliance, support in managing legal claims, and provide needed forms such as incident report forms..

Utility Representative- Can help respond to disruptions in power, water, and gas services, ensure the prompt and safe repair of utilities, preventing further infrastructure damage and liability.

Equipment Dealer- can assist with damaged farm machinery, providing replacement equipment and technical support to restore operations.



Document all processes that make your business run.

Determine what processes and equipment are critical to keeping your business open. Document contact information for equipment dealers and other service providers (Electric, Water, Sewer, Internet) essential to business operations.

Develop building and site maps, highlighting entrances and exits, customer and worker locations, livestock, equipment, chemical storage, electrical hazards, and other critical areas

Continuity plan

- Develop your support team, familiarize the local first responders with your operation. They can help you with the plan and will have additional resources to get you started.
- Make sure you have all the needed emergency contact numbers. Identify several accessible places to store the numbers.
- Plan a temporary location for livestock, machinery, chemicals, and other supplies if your company is forced to relocate. Store extra supplies off-site.
- Have a plan for alternate communication with employees, customers, and suppliers during recovery.
- Define and document employee leadership roles and responsibilities to be used during and after an emergency.

Develop a backup schedule for computer files and other records.

- Develop a process for accessing electronic records for remote locations.
- Keep a backup of all tax, accounting, payroll, and production records, employee contacts, customer, and supplier data off-site.
- Keep copies of all paper and computer files in an accessible but off-site location.

Contact your insurance agent.

- Annually review your insurance coverage..
- Get additional coverage for “all-hazard” situations (e.g., flood, hail damage).
- Keep copies of critical documents, such as insurance policy, incident reports, finance records, and receipts of major purchases and repairs.

Prepare your employees.

- Inform your employees of the business emergency plan; review it with them regularly.
- Document each employee’s specific role during an emergency and ensure they are trained to follow the plan and know how to access and use emergency contact information.
- Ensure that staff have at least two reliable methods such as NOAA Weather Radio with Specific Area Message Encoding (SAME) or Mobile apps, to stay informed on changing weather conditions.
- Ensure employees know the exit locations and escape routes for the building.
- Identify and clearly mark safe areas around the farm for “shelter-in-place “ situations such as severe weather.

Review your emergency preparedness plan annually and after any significant weather event.

- Address any gaps you discovered
- Update Emergency Management Material (Employee Manuals, Training, Signage, and Postings)
- Stay up to date on Weather Emergencies in your industry and use the experiences of other farms to update your plan.



THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

EXTENSION

Resources: The Center for Food Security & Public Health, Iowa State University
Ohio State University Agritourism