

Livestock Disaster Preparedness - LIVESTOCK BEHAVIOUR AND HANDLING IN AN EMERGENCY

- When livestock are frightened, they will revert back to their natural instinct to flee or fight.
- Livestock can be difficult in times of panic or during a bad storm and be too frightened to load or this may instigate a flight instinct.
- Livestock will not behave in normal ways during an emergency. Assumptions should not be made about how they are going to react.
- Never turn your back on an animal. Keep them in your sight at all times and always have a way out – do you trap yourself between the animal and they way out.
- Even the calmest and most tame of animals can strike out during a time of fear – no matter who is handling them.
- Animals sense fear and panic in humans. If you scared or panicked, your animals will sense the fear and react accordingly.
- An animal's natural reaction to fear includes fleeing, charging, kicking, striking out, running over people or other animals or biting.
- You cannot reason with a scared animal - they do not understand that you are there to help them. They only see you as a predator which invokes fear.
- Do not leave halters on horses when turned loose in pastures or corrals. They can become caught on branches, posts, fencing, etc. and injure or kill the horse.
- Do not tie animals together when releasing them. This is dangerous to people and the animals.
- Do not feed animals new feeds during an emergency – the safest feed is grass hay.
- Do not lock or tie animals up during a disaster event such as a flood or fire. They need the ability to escape on their own.