Protecting Livestock during a Hurricane

- When the forces of a hurricane cause flooded conditions, livestock that are not in a confined area can usually take care of themselves. Do not, however, let them become trapped in low-lying pens.

- In broad, level flood plains where flood waters are seldom deeper than 3 or 4 feet, construct mounds of soil on which livestock can stay until flood waters recede. Construct mounds from bales of hay for hogs to climb on. Try to build these mounds where they will not be washed away by fast-flowing water.

- Provide feed and water for the livestock. Water is essential. Thirsty animals will try to break out to get to flood waters. If water is in short supply, limit the livestock’s feed intake.

- If animals are housed with machinery, fasten bales of straw in front of sharp edges and protruding parts such as cutter bars or crank handles. Do not use hay because animals will eat it. Try to cover wooden paddle wheels on combines or choppers since these parts can be dangerous if partially broken.

- Block off narrow passageways where animals would be unable to turn around. A few heavy animals in a narrow dead end can be dangerous not only to themselves but also to the buildings in which they are housed.

- Make provisions to block livestock from any access to herbicides, pesticides and treated seeds. Store such chemicals and seeds where flood waters will not contaminate livestock feed or water.

- Turn off electricity at the main switch. Livestock could damage electric fixtures, causing fires or electrocutions.

- If dairy barns may become flooded, drive cattle out of the barn. During the rapid rise of water, cattle often refuse to leave a barn and may drown if the water rises high enough in the barn.