Bastrop County Farm Disaster Risk Management and Mitigation Checklist

Before

Pre-disaster plan:
Think through “what was my worst area’s disaster in living memory, and how long did it last?” Work towards being prepared for a similar situation.

- Know where will you get disaster information
  - Sign up for weather and disaster alerts (see “Communications” in pg. 4 resource section):
    - Warn Central Texas: general emergency alerts
    - Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEA): general emergency alerts
    - Watch Duty- fire alerts
    - Bastrop County Office of Emergency Management Facebook Page: up-to-date emergency postings
- Have a few ‘key contacts’ who know you will call them and who they should contact or what they should do (phone tree)
  - Ideal to have contacts both in-region and out-of-region: ensure that you have someone outside of disaster region who can communicate on your behalf
  - Know who to contact for specific needs:
    - Human and livestock evacuation locations and points of contact
- Know when to check your emergency equipment
- Know your evacuation locations
  - What do you bring?
    - Research and build a “go box” for critical items to bring in an emergency: important legal docs, emergency money, medication or medical equipment, etc.
  - Where do pets go or how do you bring them and what do they need?
- Take periodic photos of farm/crops in case they are needed to reference for insurance or other post-disaster claims
  - Include these photos in an Emergency Folder or Emergency SOP document
  - Consider working with ag aware insurance agents or legal professionals
  - Create a “NOK Box” (Next of Kin) - critical information for next of kin in the event of untimely passing.

Farm Layout:
- Site crop and livestock areas to minimize risk:
  - Know flood prone areas
  - Know wind direction
  - Know where cold air pockets form
  - Know where high ground is available for livestock shelter
- Identify possible storage or extra space on the farm for injured/displaced livestock, or to store extra harvested crops/transplants

Prepare and Protect Critical Resources:

Water
- Protect outdoor faucets
- Turn off water and drain lines where possible
- Fill bathtubs
- Cover, fill, secure barrels, troughs, etc.

Food and Feed
- Consider dietary needs, have emergency food on hand, 1 week minimum
- Tight-fitting covered barrels with enough rations for animals to last at least several days; secure them
  - Food grade blue barrels with spin-on lids are a good option for protecting livestock feed

Energy (fuel, batteries, phone power banks)
- Consider solar powered generator for small equipment recharging or if gas powered generator fails
- Ensure you have converters to enable you to flexibly access stored power (i.e. converters to charge a phone with a drill battery)

Repair Materials
- Stock reserves:
  - Irrigation/plumbing supplies (glue, fittings, extra pipe etc.)
  - Greenhouse plastic
  - Row cover (purchase before it’s needed)

Communications:
- Weather radio
  - Consider a radio with "Specific Area Message Encoder" (SAME) functionality: these can be set to issue warnings about disasters in a specific area, such as Bastrop County
  - Identify local station (Camp Mabry’s WXK27 (162.400 MHz) for Bastrop County)
  - Test for additional channels. Tuning into stations that are farther away and in the path of incoming weather/other disasters can provide critical information
- Prepare and periodically test backup power sources for communication devices: internet, phones, radios

Livestock:
- Do you have a plan to evacuate livestock?
  - Know where, how, and who can support. See “Resources” on pg. 3
  - Make sure you are on AgriLife Extension list for supplies- contact local Extension Agent (see resource section on pg. 3)
- Prepare livestock water systems for drought and freeze conditions
- Store backup water for livestock
- Prepare livestock shelters ahead of incoming weather
- Plan livestock shearing with winter weather in mind (sheared livestock will need extra protection in the event of cold snaps)
- Have backup systems in place for heating/cooling for brooders or emergency care of newborn livestock

During	After	Seasonal Recommendations
Pay attention to home, family, and farm needs. **Communication:** ● Stay in contact with your network ● Ensure weather radio and other emergency communication sources are turned on ○ Tune in to appropriate channels ■ Camp Mabry's WXK27 (162.400 MHz) for Bastrop County ■ Ensure communication redundancy (radio, phone, and have backups) ■ Be ready to call for evacuation (personal/livestock) **Livestock:** ● Maintain water access (break ice before too thick in freezes) ● Monitor animal condition ● Are heaters working? ● Keep stock tanks filled in drought if possible ● Have a toolbox and extra materials (ratchet straps, lumber, sheet metal, hardware) for emergency structures for livestock **Crops:** ● Damage mitigation as possible: ○ Check row cover security ○ Heat greenhouses or hoophouses if possible **Home:** ● Do you have a safe place available for your family? ● Safety equipment (helmets, lights) on or nearby ● Be ready to implement backup strategies for heating or cooling	Understand that you and your loved ones may experience a state of shock - disasters can be traumatic. Connection to a sense of purpose is extremely helpful during or after, whether that is community, family, or faith. ● Be gentle with yourself and others ● Accept help ● Ask for help ● Connect to support ○ 'Your' people ○ Others affected who may understand and may have info or resource connections ○ Support groups ○ Counseling (ag aware is best) **You may be evacuated and unable to immediately assess damage: be patient.** **When you can return, be aware of dangers from impacted infrastructure.** ● Unsafe structures ● Electric, gas lines ● Traumatized animals, livestock and wild **Safely:** ● Assess what materials can be salvaged ● Assess property access: ○ Are roads clear for emergency or recovery service access? ● Address crop loss and adjust crop plan ● Take photos pre, post and periodically to document damage ● Inform insurance/lawyer ● Start recovery and repairing damage	Much like the rest of farming, disaster preparedness is an ongoing process. Below are seasonal recommendations for a seasonal flow to your disaster preparations: **Winter** - Rehearse plans for response to Spring flooding and tornado risk - Review and update overall farm emergency response plan - Order extra supplies when purchasing for upcoming growing season: - Irrigation repair materials - Greenhouse plastic **Spring** - Rehearse plans for Summer risk of drought, extreme heat, and fire - Prepare for summer drought and fire risk **Summer** - Rehearse plans for Fall risk of heavy rains, flash flooding, straight line winds **Fall** - Rehearse plans for severe winter weather

Bastrop County Area Resources		
Topic	**Name**	**Description**
Education and Preparation	AgriLife Learn	Wide variety of online educational courses and resources for farmers. Website: **agrilifelearn.tamu.edu/s**
	Bastrop County AgriLife Extension (512) 581-7186	Point of contact for livestock needs during disaster. Can provide educational resources and programming on ways to manage livestock during a disaster and to get land/livestock ready for a disaster (litter build up, grazing management, pond construction). Newsletter & email outreach including publications on disaster management included on their website. Website: **bastrop.agrilife.org**
	Bastrop County Community Emergency Response Team (CERT)	The Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) program provides education and training for volunteers to support during community disaster and emergency response. Website: **co.bastrop.tx.us/page/em.cert**
	Bastrop County Health Department (512) 581-4200	Point of contact for County level health information. Website: **bastrop.agrilife.org**
	Bastrop County Office of Emergency Management (512) 581-4022	The Bastrop County Office of Emergency Management (OEM) provides leadership, coordination, and support for efforts to prevent, prepare for, respond to, recover from, and mitigate against threatened or actual natural and man-made disasters and acts of terrorism. Website: **co.bastrop.tx.us/page/em.home**
	Bastrop County NRCS (512) 321-2489 ext 3	Free technical assistance and financial support to protect natural resources and meet unique conservation needs, including those relating to ponding, flooding, erosion, energy efficiency, and crop protection infrastructure. Website: **nrcs.usda.gov**
	Texas Center for Local Food AskMe@TexasLocalFood.org	One-on-one technical assistance, business development support, and food system resilience work. Website: **texaslocalfood.org**

	TXFED.org	Peer-to-peer network made by and for farmers, ranchers, and farmers market organizers to support increased customers and sales, development of new market opportunities, and the creation of jobs leading to economic sustainability of Texas local food systems. Website: **TXFED.org**
Communications	Bastrop County Office of Emergency Management Facebook (512) 581-4200	Provides the latest up-to-date emergency postings from Bastrop Office of Emergency Management. Website: **facebook.com/BastropCountyOEM**
	Bastrop County Farm Emergency Response Network	Communication network of farmers to provide alerts and support during natural or other disasters. Discord Server: Join here
	Firewise	Sponsored by the National Fire Protection Association to encourage and support community action to reduce wildfire risk. Provides resources, assessment, and tools. Website: **texaswildfirerisk.com/firewise**
	Warn Central Texas	Emergency notification system to residents of Central Texas. Registering with WarnCentralTexas allows local officials to contact their communities by phone, email and text during times of disasters or public safety events. Website: **warncentraltexas.org**
	Watch Duty	Watch Duty is a service run by over 150 volunteers – firefighters, dispatchers, and first responders – who monitor radio scanners and other official sources 24 hours a day to send you the most up-to-date information. Accessible via app or online. Website: **app.watchduty.org**
	National Weather Service: SAME Radios	Information about new receivers that take advantage of a "Specific Area Message Encoder" (SAME) feature now a part of all NOAA Weather Radio Stations. These allow for customizing emergency alerts to a specific area.
	National Weather Service: Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEA)	Information about a nationwide text emergency alert system, called Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEA), which will warn you when weather threatens.
Recovery	AgriLife Disaster Assessment and Recovery	Provides support with damage assessments. Emphasis on county animal issues plans, animal supply points, locating and stabilizing displaced livestock, carcass disposal, and access to USDA assistance programs.

		Website: **agrilifeextension.tamu.edu/assets/environment-natural-resources/disaster-preparedness-recovery**
	Bastrop County Cares (512) 409-3116	Provides volunteers to provide food and support to emergency responders and supports resource allocation as needed. Can make referrals and connect families who need access to resources like emergency food, shelter, or mental health support after a disaster. Website: **bastropcares.org**
	FSA Disaster Assistance Programs	USDA offers a variety of programs to help farmers, ranchers, communities, and businesses that have been hard hit by natural disaster events. The Farm Service Agency Disaster Assistance Programs site maintains a list of available disaster support resources. Website: **fsa.usda.gov/resources/programs/disaster-assistance-programs**
	TDA Star Fund	The STAR Fund (State of Texas Agriculture Relief Fund) was created solely with monetary donations from private individuals and entities to fund disaster recovery efforts. STAR Fund money may be used to assist farmers, ranchers and agribusiness owners in rebuilding fences, restoring operations and paying for other agricultural disaster relief. Website: **texasagriculture.gov/Home/Production-Agriculture/Disaster-Assistance/STAR-Fund**

Please send feedback to: AskMe@TexasLocalFood.org

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