

Disaster Response

Welcome, Introductions in breakout rooms

Shared Community Agreements for review

Shared Language PowerPoint:

What is a Disaster? FEMA definition

Continuum of Magnitude

Examples of emergencies vs disasters

State vs Regional/Local response:

State– terrorism, nuclear threat, infectious disease, large-scale disaster

The State's primary role is to support local emergency response officials..."all disasters are local". Flooding, ice and snow, etc. disasters are all run by locals. When local capacity and capability are maxed out, they lean on the state for support - resources, facilitation, etc. Steve Crawford at Dept of Ag is one of the leads for the State's Emergency Support Function 11 - Agriculture, Cultural and Natural Resources who facilitates such support. The most obvious exception to the rule of local primacy is animal health disasters. There is no local animal health authority, so those come to us first.

Regional – weather events

1) Farm Service Agency, Jeffrey Holmes and Marilyn Milne

Requests done at county level, document 30%+ crop loss (example: freeze event May 18th resulted in significant crop losses for 8/10 counties) This designation is important as it may push for AD HOC funding to become available. Crop insurance is an important factor in disaster relief for farms. FSA will sometimes reach out for assistance in identifying Best Management Practices to prepare for or respond to disasters/emergencies.

FSA Shared the following resources:

https://www.fsa.usda.gov/Assets/USDA-FSA-Public/usdafiles/FactSheets/emergency_disaster_designation_declaration_process-factsheet.pdf

<https://www.farmers.gov/sites/default/files/2022-07/farmersgov-disaster-assistance-brochure-07-21-2022.pdf>

<https://www.fsa.usda.gov/news-room/fact-sheets/index>

2) Jeremy DeLisle, UNH Extension Fruit and Vegetable Team

How do we best report events and collect information. Example: reporting May 18th freeze damages, variations in severity at different elevations, interviewing growers, taking photos at site visits, summarizing in reports for FSA and DOA. Yield loss and potential economic loss calculated to determine relief needed. Evaluated under the lens of science. Summarized by county and reported with individual farmers' identification kept confidential. Currently a survey is in the works to help understand risk factors and losses.

"I should add that in addition to the value of the crop lost, producers continue to mention the resulting lost sales due to customers not coming to the farm to pick apples, for example. This is why I make a plug each time I speak with media representatives that in years like this, it's even more important that we as customers get out to visit farmstands, markets, etc, to purchase products."

- 3) Sarah Allen, UNH Extension States Dairy Specialist
Preventing profit loss, production loss, animal loss
Extreme heat: access to shelter, heat mitigation, feed challenges
Flooding: relocation, contamination
Mass casualty events: requiring animal composting/animal carcass removal
NRCS - practice standard for emergency mortality disposal, [www.nrcs.usda.gov/sites/default/files/2022-09/Emergency Animal Mortality Management 368 NHCP CPS 2022.pdf](http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/sites/default/files/2022-09/Emergency_Animal_Mortality_Management_368_NHCP_CPS_2022.pdf)
- 4) Mary Choate, UNH Extension Food Safety
Focused on Flooding: Food directly exposed to flood waters is “adulterated” and cannot be sold. Splash and seep concerns, cross-contamination from equipment. Cover crops are used to break down contaminants from flooding. Extreme rain is usually in October at end of harvest, but there are concerns in summer with potential flooding.
<https://www.fda.gov/regulatory-information/search-fda-guidance-documents/guidance-industry-evaluating-safety-flood-affected-food-crops-human-consumption>

- 5) Farm Strong Weather Report --- Video from University of Delaware Cooperative Extension

Know that it's okay to just listen, not always our job to save/solve, no silver lining sometimes.

As service providers, we know how stressful farming careers and lifestyles can be. We are uniquely positioned to support the success of our neighbors, family members and clientele because we understand the uniqueness of their motivations, concerns and well-being.

Confident Conversations resources: This training series aims to strengthen skills and confidence in your ability to use proven communication tools to reduce risks and build resilience in your community members and their enterprises. Resources for this series can be found here:

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1yZ_B86Xq6crqXEUXjT4LXylyAoVxXpRt?usp=sharing (people have viewing and download privileges and the webinar series is on this YouTube channel:

<http://www.udel.edu/0010833>

Importance of Stress Management, Social Resiliency, Farmers want peer support: example of peer support networks at Vernon Family Farm's [Fireside Chat](#)

- 6) Climate resiliency & disaster prevention

1:1 Consulting: UNH Cooperative Extension is piloting a new program working with a select number of farms that have an interest in learning more about how they can reduce the impacts of a changing climate by implementing practices to make their operations more resilient. Through a one-on-one assessment including soil characteristics, topography, and current management practices, we can identify areas where a change in plans might lead to reduced risk of crop losses from drought, floods, or winter injury; better animal health; and less stress for farm workers.

More info at: <https://extension.unh.edu/blog/2023/04/your-farm-climate-resilient>

Additional resources

- **Mental health resources**

Crisis Lines, Service Locators, Information & Resources <https://extension.unh.edu/mental-health-resources>

<https://attra.ncat.org/publication/farm-stress-and-emotional-well-being-part-i/>

<https://attra.ncat.org/publication/farm-stress-and-emotional-well-being-part-ii/>

https://attradev.ncat.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/disaster-assistance_FRSAN.pdf

- **Crop Insurance/ Risk Reduction**

Session 6 of this Winter Webinar Series is about Crop Insurance & Insurable Risk Reduction:

<https://extension.unh.edu/blog/2023/04/beginning-farming-small-scale> This would be great to share with farmers who want to know about Crop Insurance in NH

- Farm Commons has some podcasts about risk reduction. Available wherever you download podcasts or at:

<https://farmcommons.org/library/resources/podcasts/>

Examples: [Episode 67](#): The Truth About Crop and Livestock Insurance Premiums, [Episode 64](#): Decoding Your Food Safety Liability Coverage

Discussion

- Question was posed on Labor/workforce challenges - how are NH farmers doing with recruitment/retention of employees?
 - Hard to get data on this but it is the general sentiment that labor has gotten more expensive over the past several years; COVID amplified an already ongoing issue
 - UNH Cooperative Extension is part of multi-state effort to help farmers become the best employers they can be. Resources are available at the Farm Labor Dashboard <https://www.uvm.edu/aglabor/dashboard/welcome>
 - H-2A visas are used by some and use of the program by NH farms may be a metric to look at for local labor availability though it is meant for seasonal work, (dairy is year-round and can't utilize as easily)
- In regards to production costs - how much of an increase has there been over the past few years?
 - Feed prices increased, Increased mechanization or automation when affordable/available, more data is needed
- Sample of what other industry support has looked like post disaster/emergency: Craft Emergency Relief Fund - <https://cerfplus.org/>

Other Updates:

- Bringing back Ag Professionals Day as part of this Network – save the date of Sept 14th for a daylong Networking & Professional Development Day
- NHAMF –USDA has upcoming/incoming infrastructure grants with \$100K minimum award. Feedback is about to be solicited.
- Extension on-farm events throughout the rest of the season: <https://extension.unh.edu/event-tags/2023-production-agriculture-summer-twilight-meeting>
- Jumpstart- free program for small to medium sized farms to analyze/improve food safety More Info at: <https://bit.ly/jumpstartfarm>