Animal Welfare:
Equine

During animal health emergency situations – whether a natural disaster or infectious disease outbreak response – animal welfare issues must be considered and addressed. This handout overviews some of the pertinent animal welfare considerations for equine during animal health emergencies.

Animal Welfare

Animal welfare is the ethical responsibility of ensuring the well-being of animals. It refers to the physical and mental state of the animal and includes consideration of the animal’s health, behavior, and biological function.

Animal welfare plans need to be continuously evaluated and refined

The Five Freedoms of Animal Welfare

The internationally recognized ideal states of welfare, can provide valuable guidance and a framework for determining and assessing animal welfare situations.

Freedom From Hunger and Thirst
- Providing ready access to fresh water and a diet to maintain health and vigor

Freedom From Discomfort
- Providing appropriate environment, including shelter and a comfortable resting area

Freedom From Pain, Injury, Disease
- Veterinary examination upon entry/exit
- Illness
- Injury
- Nutritional well-being

Freedom To Express Normal Behavior
- Herd animals
  - Social nature
  - Stressed if separated from herd mates

Freedom From Fear and Distress
- Elevated stress
  - Stressed animals are unpredictable
  - Experienced handlers needed

Freedom From Hunger and Thirst
- Water: 5 gallons water/1000 pound animal
- Feed
  - 1-2% of body weight
  - Hay or grass pastures
  - Possibly grain
- Monitor all feed and water intake

Just-In-Time training materials can be found at http://www.cfsph.iastate.edu/Emergency-Response/just-in-time-training.php
Responders Mental Health and Animal Welfare

- Response stress can affect mental health of responders
- May affect animals welfare
  - Responder apathy
  - Responder fatigue
  - Uncompleted tasks
  - Carelessness of tasks
  - Forgetting overall welfare needs

Additional Resources

- American College of Animal Welfare [www.acaw.org](http://www.acaw.org)

Development of this educational material was by the Center for Food Security and Public Health at Iowa State University through funding from the Multi-State Partnership for Security in Agriculture MOU-2014-HSEMD-002. June 2014.