

Dear all,

Kindly receive the severe weather alert below and disseminate widely as stipulated in the NAC and EWC terms of reference.

In light of this severe weather alert as produced by the South African Weather Service (SAWS) and other centers, the following advisory guidelines are suggested. It is emphasized that these advisories are broad guidelines and should be interpreted considering the local aspects of the region such as soil types, cultural preferences and farming systems. Depending on the particular region, the prioritization of the guidelines will differ. The basic strategy to follow would be to minimize and diversify risk. The province should further simplify, downscale and package the information according to their language preference and if possible use local radio stations and farmers' days in disseminating the information

### **Special weather advisory issued by SAWS, valid 17 August 2020**

#### **Very cold conditions expected over the Hantam and Karoo Hoogland in the Northern Cape, including the interior of the Western Cape.**

Advisory (colour coded **yellow**), meaning "be aware". This indicates that a potential hazard *may occur* in the next 2 to 6 days. It is aimed as a "heads up" and raises awareness of potential hazardous conditions.

#### **Below are suggested strategies during cold weather conditions**

When temperatures plunge below zero, livestock producers need to give extra attention to their animals. Prevention is the key to dealing with hypothermia, and other cold weather injuries in livestock.

#### **What to do when cold/snowfall conditions are forecast**

##### **Protecting livestock from cold weather/snowfalls conditions**

- Please take the extra care to provide for your pets and livestock during cold period.
- Management of the cow's environment- move all livestock to the safe area. e.g. 'warm place',
- It is very important that livestock be provided extra hay/forage/feed as up to double the calories for normal body heat maintenance may be needed in extreme cold.
- Do not shear the Angora goat. Also, take extra time to observe livestock, looking for early signs of disease and injury.
- Severe cold-weather injuries or death primarily occur in the very young or in animals that are already debilitated. Cases of cold weather-related sudden

death in calves often result when cattle are suffering from undetected infection, particularly pneumonia. Sudden, unexplained livestock deaths and illnesses should be investigated quickly so that a cause can be identified and steps can be taken to protect remaining animals.

- Special attention should be paid to very young and old animals. They may be less able to tolerate temperature extremes and have weaker immune systems.

### **Protecting plants from cold weather/ snowfalls**

- Protect plants by Covering – paper, cloth – over framework around tree, mulching.
- Wrapping trunks of frost sensitive trees eg. Citrus.
- Watering during cold stages (irrigate drop with frost/apply just a trickle at base of tree).
- Increase air circulation.

### **Following are a number of concerns and recommendations**

- Our animals, especially indoor/outdoor pets, probably do not have an adequate cold coat for protection in these very low temperatures.
- Hypothermia and dehydration are the two most probable life-threatening conditions for animals in cold weather, wet conditions and wind-chill add greatly to the cold-stress for animals.
- Livestock should be provided with wind-break and roof shelter, and monitored for signs of discomfort (extensive shivering, weakness, lethargy, etc.).
- It is critical that animals have access to drinking water. Usual water sources may freeze solid in low temperatures and dehydration becomes a life-threatening factor. Many of our animals, especially the young, may not know how or be unable to break several inches of ice to reach water. In general, animals tend to drink less in extreme cold, risking dehydration.
- Adding a warm sloppy bran mash, sloppy moistened beet pulp or soaking pelleted feed in warm water is a good way to add water to your horses; diet and provide some comfort food; in the cold weather.
- Select frost tolerant plants over frost prone areas.
- Place cold sensitive plants in protected locations Western, northern exposures, full sun or lock walls.
- Do not prune cold-damaged plants until they begin growing in spring.

**A comprehensive list of strategies can be found in the monthly NAC Advisory. It can be accessed from the following websites: [www.dalrrd.gov.za](http://www.dalrrd.gov.za). For more information contact:-**

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