

EXTREME COLD WEATHER



WHAT TO DO WHEN COLD/SNOWFALL CONDITIONS ARE FORECAST

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.

Protecting livestock from cold weather/light snowfall conditions

- Extra care is required and move all livestock to a safe, warm place.
- Livestock must be provided with extra hay/forage/feed. (Double the calories to maintain normal body heat.)
- Do not shear Angora goats.
- Look out for early signs of disease and injury. Severe cold-weather injuries (undetected infection, particularly pneumonia) or death primarily occurs in very young and weak animals as they may be less able to tolerate temperature extremes and have weaker immune systems.
- Sudden, unexplained livestock deaths and illnesses should be investigated quickly so that a cause can be identified and steps can be taken to protect the remaining animals.

Protecting plants from cold weather/snowfall

- Insure crops/livestock against financial loss due to extreme cold weather.
- Make use of mulching.
- Wrap trunks of frost sensitive trees like citrus and cover the framework around a tree with paper or cloth.
- Water during cold stages (i.e. make use of drip irrigation).
- Increase air circulation.

Concerns and recommendations

- Hypothermia and dehydration are the two most probable life-threatening conditions for animals in cold weather as animals tend to drink less.
- Wet conditions and wind chill add to the cold stress for animals; especially indoor/outdoor pets that do not have an adequate cold coat for protection in very low temperatures.
- Provide livestock with a wind-break and roof shelter. Monitor for signs of discomfort (extensive shivering, weakness, lethargy, etc.).
- Drinking water must be accessible. Water sources may freeze solid in low temperatures and many young animals may not know how or be unable to break through the ice to reach water.

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- 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 animals' diet and provide comfort food in the cold weather.
- Select frost tolerant plants for frost prone areas.
- Place cold sensitive plants in areas exposed to more sunlight.
- Wait until Spring to prune cold-damaged plants.

For more information or assistance, contact:

Jody Wentzel (Pr Techni Eng)
Sub-programme manager: Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR)
Sustainable Resource Use and Management (SRUM)
Western Cape Department of Agriculture

Private Bag X 1, Elsenburg, 7607
2nd Floor, Main Building, Elsenburg,
Muldersvlei Road

Telephone: 021 808 7805
Fax: 021 808 5370
E-mail: Jody.Wentzel@westerncape.gov.za

Disaster Management Centre Western Cape

(assist with major disasters and link up various stakeholders in the event of a disaster):

Cape Winelands Disaster Management Centre

Head of Centre: Shaun Minnies
Tel: 021 888 5847 / 0861 265 263
Email: Shaun@capewinelands.gov.za
Email: Disastermanagement@capewinelands.gov.za
Physical Address: Worcester Fire Station, Breede Valley, 6850

Central Karoo Disaster Management Centre

Head of the Centre: Neil Oerson
Tel: 023 414 4467
Email: nielo@skdm.co.za
Email: westcoastdm@wcdm.co.za
Physical Address: N1 North Weighbridge, Beaufort West.

Garden Route Disaster Management Centre

Head of Centre: Gerhard Otto
Tel: 044 803 1435
Email: Gotto@grdm.gov.za
Email: disastermanagement@gardenroute.gov.za
Physical Address: 54 York Street, George, 6529

Overberg Disaster Management Centre

Head of Centre: Reinard Geldenhuis
Tel: 028 425 1690
Email: rgeldenhuis@odm.org.za
Physical Address: 26 Long Street, Bredasdorp, 7300

West Coast Disaster Management Centre

Head of the Centre: Franquin Pietersen
Tel: 021 023 3692
Email: westcoastdm@wcdm.co.za
Physical Address: 17 Station Street, Moorreesburg.

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Alternatively, contact your district Sustainable Resource Use and Management (SRUM), Agricultural Producer Support and Development (APSD) or State Veterinary Office:

SUSTAINABLE RESOURCE USE AND MANAGEMENT (SRUM): LandCare District Managers

West Coast:

SRUM District Manager: Jan Smit
Tel: 022 433 2330
Email: Jan.Smit@westerncape.gov.za
Physical Address: 42 Long Street,
Moorreesburg, 7310

Central Karoo:

SRUM District Manager: Phyllis Pienaar:
Tel: 023 414 2126 / 083 649 9306
Email: Phyllis.Pienaar@westerncape.gov.za
Physical Address: Pieter Jacobs Avenue,
Beaufort West, 6970

Overberg:

SRUM District Manager: Grant Jephtas
Tel: 028 425 4819/ 079 378 0672
Email: Grant.Jephtas@westerncape.gov.za
Physical Address: Golf Street, Bredasdorp, 7300

Cape Winelands:

SRUM District Manager, Cape Winelands:
Rudolph Röscher
Tel: 021-808 7801/ 083 675 1315
Email: Rudolph.Roscher@westerncape.gov.za
Physical Address: Veld Reserve, Worcester,
6849

Garden Route/Eden:

SRUM District Manager: Hannes Muller
Tel: 044 803 3720 / 082 908 1113
Email: Hannes.Muller@westerncape.gov.za
Physical Address: Airport Road, George, 6529

AGRICULTURAL PRODUCER SUPPORT AND DEVELOPMENT (APSD)

West Coast:

Rose Horne (Swartland)
Marius Du Randt (North West Coast)
027 201 3502/3503/3506/3521

Central Karoo:

Vianca Erasmus
023 415 3134 | 021 551 1034 | 023 541 1970 | 049
844 0365

Overberg:

Hennis Germishuys
028 425 4832

Cape Winelands:

Cobus van Schalkwyk
021 808 7050 | 023 312 1021 | 023 614 3610 | 021
873 0241

Garden Route:

Clyde Lamberts
044 803 3747/3757 | 044 203 9428/9452

Cape Metropole:

Ayanda Obose
021 483 7785 | 021 808 7085/7067

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VETERINARY SERVICES

State Veterinarian: George

044-803-3771/0

Ms Shirelle Strydom (Admin Clerk)

Dr Leana Janse van Rensburg

0837970010

State Veterinarian: Boland

021-808-5028/5253

Ms Renee Jack (Admin Clerk)

Dr Vivien Malan

0822289076

State Veterinarian: Swellendam

021-808-5059/028-425-4850

Mr Bidwell Gelwana (Admin Clerk)

Dr Christi Kloppers

0836415163

State Veterinarian: Beaufort West

023-414-9220/1

Ms Chriszelda Mtwalo (Admin Clerk)

Mr Anton Barnard (Acting)

082 805 9757

State Veterinarian: Vredendal

027-201-3514/0

Ms Deidre Daniels (Admin Clerk)

Dr Chanel Lombard

027 201 3510

State Veterinarian: Malmesbury

022 482 1380

Ms Samantha Burger (Admin Clerk)

Dr Michael Swart

083 469 2404

State Veterinarian: Oudtshoorn

044-203-9443/5

Ms Jeoninse Noni (Admin Clerk)

Dr Cathy Fox

082 699 6043

State Veterinarian: Worcester

021-808-5052

Mr Daniel Ryan (Admin Clerk)

Dr Ansulize Pepler

060 962 0118