

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:

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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

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Garden Route Disaster Management Centre

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West Coast Disaster Management Centre

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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

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SRUM District Manager: Jan Smit
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Cape Winelands:

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Cape Metropole:

Ayanda Obose
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VETERINARY SERVICES

State Veterinarian: George

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Ms Shirelle Strydom (Admin Clerk)

Dr Leana Janse van Rensburg

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State Veterinarian: Boland

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Ms Renee Jack (Admin Clerk)

Dr Vivien Malan

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State Veterinarian: Swellendam

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Mr Bidwell Gelwana (Admin Clerk)

Dr Christi Kloppers

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Ms Chriszelda Mtwalo (Admin Clerk)

Mr Anton Barnard (Acting)

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State Veterinarian: Vredendal

027-201-3514/0

Ms Deidre Daniels (Admin Clerk)

Dr Chanel Lombard

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State Veterinarian: Malmesbury

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Ms Samantha Burger (Admin Clerk)

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State Veterinarian: Oudtshoorn

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State Veterinarian: Worcester

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