

Emergency Support Function #11 AGRICULTURE & NATURAL RESOURCES

Lead Agency

- Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (VDACS)

Support Agencies and Organizations

- Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR)
- Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ)
- Virginia Department of Forestry (VDOF)

- Department of Game and Inland Fisheries (DGIF)
- Department of General Services (DGS)
- Virginia Department of Health (VDH)
- Department of Historic Resources (DHR)
- Virginia Department of Social Services (VDSS)
- Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT)
- Virginia Marine Resources Commission (VMRC)
- Library of Virginia (LVA)
- Virginia Cooperative Extension (VCE)

Purpose

Emergency Support Function (ESF) #11 supports local authorities and the efforts of other state agencies to provide nutritional assistance, ensure the safety and security of the commercial food supply, control or eradicate, as appropriate, any outbreak of contagious or reportable animal disease or any outbreak of economically devastating plant pest or disease, protect natural and cultural resources and historic properties; and provide for the safety and well-being of household pets during an emergency response or evacuation situation.

Scope & Applicability

ESF #11 includes five primary functions:

1. Providing nutrition assistance: Includes determining nutrition assistance needs of disaster victims, obtaining bulk food supplies, and arranging for delivery of the supplies.
2. Includes implementing an integrated Federal, state, and local response to either an outbreak of a highly contagious or reportable disease, or an outbreak of an economically significant plant pest or disease. Ensures coordination with ESF #8 and DGIF, and issues in natural disasters are supported.
3. Ensuring the safety and security of the commercial food supply: Includes the inspection and verification of food safety in slaughter and processing plants; products in distribution and retail sites; laboratory analysis of food samples; control of products suspected to be adulterated; plant closures; and field investigations.
4. Protection of natural, cultural and historic (NCH) resources: Includes appropriate response actions to conserve, rehabilitate, recover, and restore NCH resources related to the direct affects of a disaster or the actions taken to restore resources affected by a disaster in coordination with DHR.
5. Providing for the safety and well-being of household pets: Works in coordination with the Department of Emergency Management, ESF #6 (Mass Care, Housing, and Human Services); ESF #8 (Public Health and Medical Services); ESF #9 (Search and Rescue); and ESF #14 (Recovery) to ensure an integrated response that provides for the safety and well-being of household pets.

Policies

- All departments and agencies assigned responsibilities within this ESF will develop and maintain the necessary plans, standard operating procedures, mutual aid agreements, and model contracts to successfully accomplish their tasks.

Organizational Structure

VDACS is the lead agency for ESF #11 in the Virginia Emergency Operations Center (VEOC) and is responsible for the coordination of this function, and for the maintenance of this part of the Commonwealth of Virginia Emergency Operations Plan (COVEOP). Each of the five ESF #11 functions is supported by federal and state agencies, non-governmental organizations and the private sector. Additional support agencies may be needed to provide the resources to assist with all five ESF #11 functions.

Volunteer agencies and professional organizations play major support roles in ESF #11.

- The Federation of Virginia Foodbanks, an affiliate of Second Harvest, a national distribution network for donated food, assists local providers with food supplies.
- Representatives from the Virginia Veterinary Medical Association (VVMA), the Virginia Federation of Humane Societies (VFHS), the Virginia State Animal Response Team (VASART), the Virginia Animal Control Association (VACA), and the Virginia Animal Fighting Task Force (VAFTF) work with representatives from the Virginia-Maryland Regional College of Veterinary Medicine, VDEM and VDACS to assist localities with the emergency sheltering of household pets and service animals.
- Virginia Poultry Disease Taskforce and other entities in support of a response to animal disease outbreaks.

Concept of Operations

ESF #11 staff will respond to the VEOC when an incident threatens to disrupt the routine protection of the food supply and distribution systems, or cause animal and/or plant disease outbreaks, or endanger animal health, or endanger historic, cultural or natural resources, or endanger the safety and well-being of household pets. ESF #11 will implement standard procedures and coordinate actions to assist local governments.

1. Provision of Nutrition Assistance

A catastrophic or major disaster will deprive substantial numbers of people access to food and/or the means to prepare food. The food supply and distribution network will be interrupted until roads are cleared and power is restored. Without power, many commercial cold storage and freezer facilities will be inoperable and much of the existing food supply inventory may be destroyed.

Disaster education initiatives by state and local government agencies and voluntary organizations will advise the public to stockpile food and water supplies sufficient for their household for 5 to 7 days. Residents in a disaster area must be prepared to care for themselves until the normal food supply and distribution system has been restored or supplemental food supplies have arrived.

During the increased readiness period, ESF #11 will develop estimates of the number of people who will need food based on damage projections.

The earliest situation reports and damage assessments will indicate the level of immediate human needs including food, and the condition of the infrastructure including the transportation system and the power grid.

VDACS will assist affected local governments as needed with the provision of essential food supplies to mass care facilities. Such assistance will include locating items and making them available and ensuring pick-up and delivery

through other ESFs. This assistance will be provided only during that period when local governments are unable to manage on their own due to disaster effects.

After the delivery of food supplies to the disaster area, it will be the responsibility of the receiving local government to secure and distribute these supplies to disaster victims.

The delivery of food to victims of disasters is dependent upon food sources, food protection services, transportation resources and food delivery systems. Conditions in the disaster area determine the appropriate methods of delivering food to individuals. Food can be delivered to disaster victims and relief workers by prepared meals in fixed or mobile feeding facilities, by bulk through foodbanks or other volunteer agencies.

The Commonwealth of Virginia will not solicit or encourage the donation of food supplies. VDEM will advise local governments to also discourage the donation of food supplies. Providing food from known inventories using established systems and procedures is more efficient than using donated food supplies. Despite efforts to discourage food donations some donations may be received.

Food supplies in the impacted area must be from sources acceptable to VDACS or VDH before they can be used or distributed. This includes donated food, and food services to disaster victims in mobile or fixed feeding facilities.

State agencies that purchase, store, and deliver food as part of their normal operations will cooperate with VDACS in locating and providing surplus food for delivery to the disaster area. These agencies include those which operate food services for their own residential populations (prisons, colleges, hospitals) and those that assist with the distribution of food to local government facilities (schools and health departments).

State personnel will coordinate with local officials to ensure the ample and timely delivery of essential food supplies. They will assess the

effectiveness of the disaster relief food distribution operation and address any problems. VDACS and VDH will assist with restoration of the local food supply and distribution system. Grocery stores and other food outlets should be able to resume normal operations within several days once road access and electric power have been restored.

2. Animal and Plant Disease and Pest Response

VDACS has the primary responsibility for monitoring the incidence rates of animal and plant diseases and pest infestations affecting agriculture.

VDACS has developed procedures to address animal diseases including quarantine, depopulation and disposal activities designed to stop the spread of the pathogen, limit the number of animals that must be euthanized and minimize the effect of the disease on people, the economy and the environment.

3. Safety and Security of the Commercial Food Supply

A natural or manmade disaster could threaten the safety and security of the commercial food supply. Natural disasters may damage or destroy food storage facilities, cause floods and interrupt electrical power resulting in contamination and temperate abuse of food. Man made incidents may result in food contamination by chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear or explosive agents. Fires and food-transporting vehicle accidents may also cause food contamination.

VDACS and VDH have trained personnel and plans for responding to natural or manmade disasters that may have rendered food unsafe for consumption. The two agencies will coordinate activities to maximize the use of resources. When presented with a food safety or security mission, staff in ESF #11 will contact the VDACS Program Manager, Office of Dairy and Foods, or the Program Supervisor for Food Safety and Security. These individuals will

coordinate with staff at VDH, plan the response and keep staff in ESF #11 informed.

If the mission assigned specifically involves dairy products or meat and poultry products, the VDACS Program Supervisor for Dairy Services or the VDACS Program Manager for the Office of Meat and Poultry Services will be contacted respectively. These individuals will keep ESF #11 staff informed of actions taken.

4. Protection of Natural, Cultural and Historic (NCH) Resources

During the recovery phase of a disaster, care must be taken to protect NCH resources. Personnel with the expertise on NCH resources do not normally staff ESF #11. ESF #11 will either be augmented or a meeting will be called to address protection of a NCH resource. Participants may include DCR, DEQ, DGIF, DGS, DHR, VDACS, and other organizations as appropriate.

5. Safety of Household Pets

VDACS may be augmented by volunteers in ESF #11 and may coordinate with ESF #17 for assistance in identifying staff members and supplies needed to address the safety and well being of household pets. The primary focus will be missions assigned to assist local and state managed pet shelters. Localities are responsible for managing local pet shelters, but may request assistance for additional staff and supplies through the VEOC. VDACS, with assistance from other organizations and individuals, is responsible for state managed pet shelters. Incident Commanders for state managed pet shelters will seek assistance for additional staff and supplies through the VEOC. Most of these requests will be directed to ESF #11. Guidance and resource lists will be maintained in ESF #11.

Roles & Responsibilities

Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services

- Locate food sources and allocate as appropriate. Delivery of food will be coordinated through other ESFs.
- Coordinate a response to an outbreak of highly contagious or economically devastating animal/zoonotic disease, an outbreak of a harmful or economically significant plant pest or disease.
- Ensure that areas impacted by the disaster are a high priority for the food safety inspections and verifications as appropriate.
- Coordinate protection of endangered species.
- Coordinate the sheltering of household pets.

Department of Conservation and Recreation

- Natural heritage resource protection.
- Water quality protection.
- Provide advice and support to VDACS for protection of endangered plant and insect species.
- Provide advice and guidance related to the response, recovery and restoration of natural area preserves and state parks that are affected by a disaster event.

Department of Environmental Quality

- Provide regulatory and technical assistance regarding air and water quality protection.
- Coordinate and provide expertise to VDACS and VDH regarding policies on animal wastes and waste water disposal at state and local pet shelters.

Virginia Department of Forestry

- Provide incident management personnel to support command and control functions.
- Provide specialized heavy equipment to support emergency plant and animal disposal operations.
- Protection of forests and streams of the Commonwealth.

authorities assess damage to and appropriate treatment to protect, conserve, rehabilitate, restore or mitigate damage to cultural historic resources in the event of a disaster or catastrophic event.

Virginia Department of Social Services

- Coordinate with VDACS regarding mass sheltering so that pet sheltering is adequately incorporated.

Department of Game and Inland Fisheries

- Protection of endangered species.
- Monitor impacts on threatened and endangered species.
- During recovery phase, utilize facilities to support reestablishment of damaged wildlife populations.

Virginia Department of Transportation

- Coordinate and provide expertise regarding road conditions and logistics including food delivery and sheltering routes.
- Provide ground transportation, back-up communications, and other available resources as needed in support of State EOC operations.

Department of General Services

- Coordinate and provide expertise regarding state-owned historic resources.

Virginia Marine Resources Commission

- Coordinate and provide expertise regarding air and water quality protection.

Virginia Department of Health

- Ensure that areas impacted by the disaster are a high priority for the food safety inspections and verifications required by law.
- Coordinate and communicate with VDACS regarding potential public health threats that relate to the ESF 11 mission.
- Coordinate and communicate regarding any animal bites at state management pet shelters on areas such as incident recording, animal confinement and release.

Virginia Cooperative Extension

- Assess agricultural damage, including designating representatives to serve as members of damage assessment teams, and communicating with the agricultural community on protective actions and measures.

Department of Historic Resources

- Principal organization to identify and evaluate cultural and historic resources, and to help federal, state, and local

Library of Virginia

- Provide preservation, scientific/technical, and records and archival management advice and information to help secure and prevent or minimize loss of resources pertaining to documentary and archival records and historic documents.
- Provide preservation, scientific/technical, and records and archival management

advice and information for stabilization, security, logistics, and contracting for recovery services of damaged resources pertaining to documentary and archival records and historic documents.

Authorities & References

Authorities

- Virginia Emergency Services and Disaster Laws

References

- Emergency Management Accreditation Program (EMAP) 4.6.3: The emergency operations/response plan shall identify and assign specific areas of responsibility for performing essential functions in response to an emergency or disaster. Areas of responsibility to be addressed include: agriculture and animal management.