

Emergency Support Function # 11 Annex (Agricultural and Natural Resources)

Thurston County Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan (CEMP)



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Prepared By:

Thurston County Emergency Management
9521 Tilley Rd S.
Olympia, WA 98512
360-867-2800 | tcem@co.thurston.wa.us

In Partnership With:

Primary Agency

Thurston County Public Health & Social Services (PHSS)

Supporting Agencies & Organizations:

Thurston County Emergency Management (TCEM)
Thurston County Public Works (PW)

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1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose

This document is a supporting annex of the Thurston County Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan (*base plan*) and serves to establish policies and procedures for the effective countywide coordination of necessary Agricultural and Natural Resources ESF-11 capabilities in the event of a human, technological or natural caused disaster. Primary and supporting agencies, their general responsibilities, and critical disaster response activities related to ESF-11 are identified herein and serve as a reference for executive officials, Emergency Coordination Center (ECC) staff and incident commanders to coordinate delivery of ESF-11 resources and capabilities during incident response.

This annex establishes policies and procedures for the effective countywide coordination of Agricultural and Natural Resources capabilities in Thurston County during emergencies or disasters in support of ESF-11's core capabilities, including:

- Emergency provision of nutritional assistance.
- Coordinating animal and plant disease and pest response.
- Assuring food safety and security.
- Protecting natural and cultural resources and historic properties (NCH).
- Ensuring the safety and wellbeing of household pets and livestock.

1.2 Scope

ESF #11 coordinates aspects of agriculture and natural resource management during emergencies to include:

- Managing outbreaks of animal and plant diseases or pest infestations. This includes coordinating with ESF 8 to implement an integrated federal, state, local and tribal emergency response to an outbreak of a highly contagious or economically devastating animal or zoonotic (capable of being transmitted from animals to people) disease, highly infective plant disease or economically devastating plant pest infestation. This function will ensure that people/animal/plant health issues are coordinated and supported in an emergency or disaster situation.
- Protecting and restoring natural, cultural, and historic resources. This includes coordinating with the appropriate local, tribal, state or federal agency for the protection, preservation, conservation, rehabilitation and restoration of: Water and terrain ecosystems; Hydrology and hydroelectric resources; Farmlands; Endangered species; Fish, wildlife, plants and their habitats; Historic and archaeological landmarks; and Tribal reservations and heritage sites.

- Supporting efforts to provide animal sheltering, feeding, and emergency veterinary care during disasters. In coordination with ESF 6 – Mass Care; ESF 8 – Public Health and Medical; ESF 9 – Search and Rescue; and ESF 14 – Long-term Recovery to ensure an integrated response that provides for the safety and wellbeing of household pets and livestock.

This annex complements existing state and federal plans, including the National Preparedness Goal and the Washington State Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan, ensuring integrated efforts with other support functions.

As part of incident response operations at the Emergency Coordination Center, ESF-11 coordinates information and resources to directly support effective delivery of the following core capabilities: Mass Care Services and Environmental Response/Health and Safety. Through intersecting activities with other support functions, ESF-11 provides general support to the following additional core capabilities: Logistics, Public Information and Warning, and Critical Transportation. Capabilities are derived from the *National Preparedness Goal* and further described in the base plan. Displayed below is a summary of the primary and supported core capabilities identified for ESF-11

Primary Response Core Capability/Capabilities	
Mass Care Services	Provide support for animal and agricultural response operations, including sheltering, feeding, and emergency veterinary care for affected populations.
Environmental Response/Health and Safety	Coordinate efforts to address environmental and health impacts on natural resources, including measures to prevent or mitigate agricultural pests, diseases, and food contamination.
Supporting Core Capabilities	
Logistics and Supply Chain Management	Assist in resource distribution to agricultural and natural resource sectors, ensuring critical supplies are available for response and recovery efforts.
Public Information and Warning	Deliver timely and accurate information to the public about agricultural and natural resource issues during emergencies, including advisories and protective measures.
Critical Transportation	Support the transportation of agricultural and natural resource resources, including movement of animals and essential goods.

1.3 Laws & Policies

Animal Health Protection Act: Provides authority to USDA to prevent, detect, and respond to animal disease outbreaks.

Disaster Assistance Policy DAP9523.19, Eligible Cost Related to Pet Evacuations and Sheltering, 24 Oct 2007, FEMA.

1.4 Situation

1.4.1 General Overview

Thurston County is home to a diverse agricultural sector, including livestock, crops, and horticulture. This sector plays a critical role in the county's economy and community well-being. Additionally, the county features significant natural resources such as forests, rivers, and cultural landmarks. These assets are essential for ecological balance and serve as community lifelines during emergencies.

1.4.2 Hazard Impacts to ESF-11

Disasters can significantly disrupt the production, distribution, and access to food, agriculture, and natural resources, placing public health, local economies, and ecosystems at risk. These events can devastate crops, livestock, and supply chains, while also compromising the safety and availability of food and water for affected communities. Additionally, natural resource damage may exacerbate long-term environmental recovery efforts.

To safeguard public well-being and restore critical systems, a coordinated approach to addressing food security, animal welfare, and resource protection is essential. Any emergency or major disaster has the potential to severely impact the county's ability to manage agricultural operations, protect livestock, preserve natural resources, and ensure the continuity of food systems. Effective collaboration among governmental agencies, tribes, private sector stakeholders, and volunteer organizations is critical to mitigating these impacts and supporting recovery efforts.

See section 1.6.2 of the base plan for a summary assessment of all significant hazards that threaten Thurston County.

1.4.3 Whole Community

ESF #11 is designed to support the whole community by addressing the diverse needs of all populations, including individuals with access and functional needs, tribal communities, agricultural producers, businesses, and environmental stakeholders. It emphasizes equitable access to food resources, ensuring culturally appropriate options are available during emergencies. By engaging a broad spectrum of partners—including local farmers, food banks, private organizations, advocacy groups, and community-based organizations—ESF #11 fosters a collaborative approach to preparedness, response, and recovery. This inclusive framework ensures that all voices are heard, and resources are distributed equitably, promoting resilience and recovery for every segment of the community.

1.5 Planning Assumptions

Volunteers will want to help and can make a significant contribution to the effort.

Any prolonged power outage will place fresh or frozen food at immediate risk by rendering it unsafe to consume.

Land (truck and rail) delivery of bulk supplies may be cut off. Distribution of non-local donated goods will not be immediately possible or will have to be carried out via air transport.

Local agriculture producers and veterinarians will be the first to discover and report a suspected foreign animal disease (FAD), plant disease or pest infestation.

The time between the reporting of a FAD and its identification as an emergency is critical. A highly contagious disease could spread rapidly through a county and state via markets, product movement, and movement of people.

Production capability and/or value may become severely limited during response to a pest infestation or foreign animal disease. Such an event would greatly impact the economic stability of the county, state, and nation.

Positive and prompt actions by local, state, and (possibly) federal authorities will be required in order to stop a highly contagious disease to animals or plants. Control and eradication of such a disease will involve many county, state and federal agencies, not just those involved with agricultural activities.

First responders may not be familiar with the special conditions of an animal or plant health emergency. These include quarantine, bio-security precautions, personal protection equipment, decontamination, etc.

The county's resources would be rapidly depleted if the FAD outbreak involved multiple premises or large areas.

Livestock, wildlife, birds, plants and/or crops may be affected. Plants and/or animals may die of insect infestation or foreign animal disease and may need to be depopulated.

Some land owners, individuals or groups may strenuously object to depopulation of animals or destroying of plants. Some people may not consider the threat of the disease spread valid and may take actions counterproductive to control and eradication efforts.

Emergency shelters will have co-located facilities to care for household pets.

There will be circumstances when pet and livestock owners will not be able to protect their animals during an emergency situation, or will abandon their pets during a disaster. This includes unscheduled drop-offs at animal facilities.

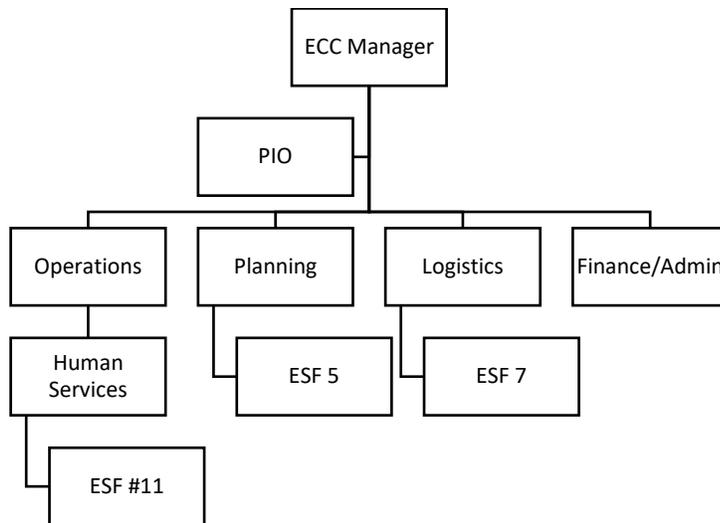
In an emergency or disaster, animals or livestock may escape. Abandoned animals are likely to suffer in an emergency and pose a risk to rescuers and the public.

Animal food supplies may become contaminated, destroyed, or be in limited supply and will need to be imported from outside the area.

2. Organization

2.1 ESF-11 Organizational Structure

During disaster operations requiring activation of the Emergency Coordination Center, ESF-#11 is organized and functions as a key component of the Operations Section, Human Services Branch. This structure facilitates seamless collaboration among primary and supporting agencies, ensuring effective allocation of resources and expertise during emergencies.



2.2 ESF-11 Agencies & Organizations

Local agencies that coordinate ESF-11 support are identified under one of two categories: primary or supporting. Definitions of each can be found under section 2.3.2 of the base plan.

Primary Agency/Agencies	
Public Health and Social Services	
Supporting Agencies	
Emergency Management	Public Works
Sheriff's Office	

3. Concept of Operations

3.1 General

Thurston County departments and organizations will coordinate and/or provide basic response in a disaster or emergency situation to the extent of their capabilities. Then, the ECC will further coordinate with other emergency resource partners including but not limited to: animal control, the veterinary community, USDA and Washington State Departments of Health, Agriculture and Fish & Wildlife for emergencies that affect the local food supply, animal and plant health, and the wellbeing of animals in the county.

Additionally, as the ECC coordinates efforts with partners such as tribal nations and other municipalities during emergency situations or disasters affecting the protection and preservation of historical resources, the county will coordinate with the WA State Departments of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, Ecology, Natural Resources, and other federal agencies.

If the ECC is activated, agriculture, health and natural resources services will be coordinated through an ESF Functional model. Incident sites will be coordinated using the Incident Command System.

Each supporting agency and organization will perform their duties in accordance with their own Emergency Operations Plans and procedures.

3.2 Activation of ESF-11

ESF 11 can be activated at any time deemed necessary by the County Manager, Emergency Services Director or by their designee. ESF-11 will be activated if:

- An animal disease outbreak poses significant health or economic risks.
- Food supply chain disruptions threaten community stability.
- Natural disasters such as floods or wildfires impact agricultural operations or natural resources.

3.3 Critical ESF-11 Response Tasks

To achieve effective disaster response, ESF- 11 coordinates information and resources among primary and supporting agencies to support critical response tasks. The critical tasks identified below align with ESF - 11’s primary core capabilities and serve as a foundation to develop intermittent objectives during disaster response to re-establish or stabilize community lifelines.

Mass Care Services		
#	Critical Task Description	Responsible Agencies
1	Identify and establish animal shelter locations to accommodate displaced livestock and pets.	TCEM/ECC
2	Coordinate feeding programs for livestock, pets, and other agricultural animals during disaster events.	PHSS/ECC
3	Deploy emergency veterinary teams to assess and address health issues in affected animal populations.	PHSS/ECC
4	Manage transportation logistics for evacuating animals from impacted areas.	TCEM/ECC
5	Collaborate with non-profits and private organizations to enhance shelter capacity and resources.	TCEM/ECC

Environmental Response/Health and Safety		
#	Critical Task Description	Responsible Agencies
1	Conduct environmental impact assessments to identify potential threats to agriculture and natural resources.	PHSS/TCEM/PW/ECC
2	Implement pest and disease control measures in agricultural areas affected by disasters.	PHSS/ECC
3	Monitor water and soil contamination levels to ensure public safety and environmental health.	PHSS/ECC
4	Develop and disseminate public advisories on food safety and contamination risks.	PHSS/ECC
5	Coordinate hazardous waste cleanup efforts to prevent further environmental degradation.	TCEM/ECC

3.5 Supporting Activities

3.5.1 Prevention & Protection

ESF #11 supports the broader Prevention efforts through development and dissemination of public education materials on the importance of pre-disaster planning for animals and the care of animals in emergencies, disasters and evacuations. Materials will emphasize and encourage self-reliance among owners.

3.5.2 Mitigation

ESF #11 supports the broader Mitigation efforts by encouraging sustainable practices to reduce vulnerability to future hazards and threat, risk, and vulnerability assessments of key ESF 11 elements.

3.5.3 Recovery

ESF #11 supports the broader emergency management and ESF-14 Recovery efforts through partnership with agencies to restore agricultural productivity and rehabilitate natural resources. Assist support agencies for long term maintenance, placement, or disposition of wildlife which cannot be returned to their normal habitats or domestic animals which have been separated from their owners.

3.5.4 Preparedness Activities

ESF #11 supports the broader Preparedness efforts through targeted agriculture public education campaigns emphasizing disaster preparedness for livestock and pets. Conducting regular training programs for emergency personnel and volunteers. Creating and maintaining an inventory of natural and cultural resources. Pre-identify animal shelter locations and establish agreements with local organizations.

4. Responsibilities

4.1 Specific Authorities & Responsibilities

ESF-11 actions are coordinated with local, tribal, state, and federal authorities. All agencies supporting ESF-11 will manage their resources based on priorities established by the Thurston County Emergency Coordination Center (ECC). On-scene assets will coordinate with Incident Command and the ECC to ensure efficient use of resources and personnel.

Thurston County relies heavily on the Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA), United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and PHSS for support before, during and after a disaster affecting agriculture. This includes surveillance for a foreign animal disease, plant disease/pest, or animal-borne disease or toxin that may pose a threat to public health, animal or horticultural industries or the economy.

4.1.1 Thurston County Public Health & Social Services (Primary Agency)

Thurston County Public Health & Social Services (PHSS): Responsible for overall coordination of ESF-11 activities.

Nutrition Assistance Policies

- Food supplies secured under ESF-11 will be suitable for household distribution or mass meal service.
- Coordination with ESF-6 ensures the transportation and distribution of food to areas of need.
- Priority is given to regions experiencing acute shortages, with consideration for equity.

Animal and Plant Disease Response Policies

- Responses to animal and plant diseases are conducted in collaboration with state and federal authorities to ensure environmental and nutritional security while minimizing economic impacts.
- Measures for controlling diseases, including humane depopulation and disposal of infected animals or plants, are guided by WSDA policies.

Food Supply Safety and Security Policies

- Actions related to food safety are coordinated with PHSS and relevant agencies.
- PHSS serves as the primary liaison for food safety communications.

4.2 General Responsibilities

Thurston County Emergency Management coordinates resource requests and interagency communication.

Thurston County Public Works and other designated agencies will lead efforts to protect and restore Natural, Cultural, and Historic (NCH) resources. Collaboration with the Washington State Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation ensures alignment with state and federal guidelines.

Public Works may also be asked assist with setting barricades for traffic detours around quarantined areas and to assist with transport of soil, carcasses, or debris.

Thurston County Sheriff's Office will coordinate with WSDA to enforce movement restrictions and establish perimeters to control a foreign animal disease. Should the incident be ruled a deliberate disease introduction, law enforcement may be asked to aid in the investigation.

5. Resource Requirements

5.1 Resource/Capability Gaps

Based on estimated hazard impacts and the current ESF-11 capabilities of local agencies, the following additional resources that may be needed during an incident to fully support ESF-11 critical response tasks.

- Veterinary clinics equipped to handle animal health emergencies.
- Designated shelters capable of accommodating displaced animals.

- Facilities for food storage and distribution to ensure community needs are met.
- Access to specialized hazmat teams for agrochemical incidents.
- Availability of advanced diagnostic facilities for animal and plant diseases.

Addressing these gaps will require enhanced collaboration with state and federal partners.

5.3 State & Federal Aid

State and federal agencies, including USDA and Washington State Emergency Management, provide critical support through funding, technical expertise, and resource deployment during emergencies.

6. Supporting Plans & Procedures

6.1 Washington State CEMP: Offers a framework for state-level emergency response and broader support efforts for ESF-11.

6.2 USDA Emergency Guidelines: Provide technical guidance for managing agricultural emergencies.

7. Terms and Definitions

Livestock – As identified in RCW, livestock means horses, mules, donkeys, cattle, bison, sheep, goats, swine, rabbits, llamas, alpacas, ratites, poultry, waterfowl, game birds, and other species so designated by statute.

Pet - Any animal that lives primarily within a person’s home and at the time of contact is accompanied by its owner or designated care provider. Most pets are domestic species of animals. However, there is an increasing number of “exotic” animals being kept as pets, ranging from insects, herpetiforms (e.g., turtles, snakes, iguanas, frogs), large cats, and others.

For the applicability to this ESF and Thurston County response operations, only those pets aligned with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) definition will meet allowability and eligibility of reimbursement of expenses.

Zoonotic Disease - Any disease that is spread from animals to people.