

# Wildfire Preparedness and Support Information for Dairy Producers

BC Dairy Association, July 2021

## GETTING PREPARED:

With the onset of wildfire season across the province, farmers situated in potential risk areas are encouraged to prepare. Wildfire maps can be accessed through the [BC Wildfire Service Dashboard](#) or by downloading the BC Wildfire app (click [here](#) for android, and [here](#) for Apple). Dairy producers are encouraged to review the '[Emergency Management Planning Workbook for BC Dairy Producers](#)' and the following emergency planning documents (mostly 1-page factsheets):

1. Refer to the Livestock *Evacuation* section of the above Workbook (page 23-26). Share key information with farm staff. Is your emergency contact list of key service providers and first responders up-to-date?
2. Moving animals can pose challenges. Calves, close-up dry and milking cows require careful planning. Weaned calves, heifers, and far off dry cows can be moved easier and sooner. See '[Animal Health Considerations for Moving Cattle](#)'.
3. Finding a good **buddy host** for your animals is not easy. Does a potential host farm have suitable facilities? Are your management styles compatible? See '[Host Farm Agreement and Considerations](#)'. Can you reach an agreement and sign a mutually-acceptable contract that is BCMMB- approved? Check this '[SAMPLE Milk Share Agreement](#)'.
4. Are your **proAction® records** and **standard operating procedures (SOPs)** in place and up to date? Do staff members have access to applicable SOPs and records? The following are SOPs, records, and program requirements to review in preparation for emergency events:
  - Shipping cattle SOP (SOP 6): What protocols to follow on your farm when shipping cattle?
  - Are all animals dual-tagged with approved NLID tags for easy identification?
  - Move-in record (record 2): Ensure to record animal movements for traceability purposes.
  - Are treatment records up to date? Note treatments and withdrawal times for animals that may be relocated to another facility/farm.
5. Call your local municipal or regional district office and/or check their websites to obtain contact information (especially if an Emergency Operations Center is activated for your area) and include this in your farm's emergency management plan.

## WILDFIRE EVACUATION INFORMATION:

Producers should consider relocating livestock during an **evacuation alert**, not at the **evacuation order stage**. The change from evacuation alert to evacuation order can happen very quickly. Below is more information about both stages and a note on what happens in an **evacuation rescind**.

## Evacuation Alert

An Evacuation Alert means you need to prepare for an evacuation on short notice. Have your emergency plan and important documents (i.e., insurance policies) available and ready to take with you. If you receive an Evacuation Alert, this is your window of opportunity to begin voluntarily relocation of your livestock without transport restrictions.

### ***Q: I received an evacuation alert – what's next?***

1. It is recommended you activate your farm emergency plan. Contact the transporters outlined in your plan and prepare to move cattle to the buddy farm(s) outlined in your plan.
2. If for whatever reason your farm's emergency plan fails, contact your local Emergency Operations Center (EOC) and let them know that you intend on relocating your herd and need support. Be aware that resources may be strained if many other livestock owners are seeking assistance.
3. Contact the BC Milk Marketing Board (BCMMB) to let them know you intend on moving cattle and for support with activating your buddy farm milk share agreement. Have a rough estimate on the number of cows or volume that will be milked per new location so the BCMMB can ensure milk pickup:
  - Kelly Harris during office hours: 604-854-4479
  - Woody Siemens outside of office hours (*contact Christine or Carla from BC Dairy and they will connect you with Woody*)
4. Contact the BC Dairy Association - we are here to help answer questions:
  - Christine Terpsma: 604-603-7872, or
  - Carla Soutar: 604-217-2052

## Evacuation Order

An Evacuation Order requires people to leave the area immediately, as human safety is in danger and the highest priority. If you receive an Evacuation Order, you are required to immediately leave your farm and follow the directions of local emergency officials, evacuating using the route(s) they've identified and head to the nearest safe location. At this stage, the transportation of livestock may no longer be permitted.

### ***Q: Can I go back to my farm after receiving an evacuation order?***

**A:** Following an evacuation order, if you need to go back to your farm to care for animals, irrigate crops, or relocate your cattle, you need to call your local authority Emergency Operations Center (EOC) for an **access permit**. You need to provide your Premises ID (PID) number to obtain an access permit. You may be escorted back on to your property if a permit is issued.

## Evacuation Rescind

Once local officials determine the situation is safe, the Evacuation Order will be rescinded and you can return home. The exception to this is if you're acquired an access permit from the EOC prior to the rescinding of the Evacuation Order.

**CONTACT LIST - Emergency Support for BC Dairy Industry  
Wildfire season 2021**

<b>BC MILK MARKETING BOARD</b>		
Woody Siemens, Director Supply Chain & Business Development (24 hr emergency contact service)	604-854-4476	<a href="mailto:wsiemens@bcmilk.com">wsiemens@bcmilk.com</a>
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