Overview

• History and overview of animal disaster response in the United States
• Improving preparedness
• Collaboration
People and Animals

AVMA Pet Ownership & Demographics Sourcebook

- 56% of households own at least one pet
- Approx. 1.5 pets per household
- Animals in U.S. households
  - 70 million dogs
  - 74.1 million cats
  - 8.3 million birds
  - 4.9 million horses

Importance of Pets

“I consider my pet(s)…….”

– family members (63.2%)
– Companions (35.8%)
– Property (1.0%)
Other Animal Populations

* The value of livestock and poultry and their products in the United States in 2008

$139,800,000,000*
Human-Animal Bond in Disasters

People may put themselves and others in danger to care for animals

– Refuse to evacuate

  • 25% would NOT evacuate without animals
  • 50-70% would attempt to rescue later

– Return to danger zone to rescue or care for animals

Photo: FEMA; D. Saville
Animals in Disasters: Public Health Issues

• Refusal to evacuate
• Animal carcasses – disposal issues
• Shelter issues
  – Aggressive animals
  – Dog and cat bites
  – Emotional fatigue
• Potential for unknown contaminants
PETS Act: 2006
(Pet Evacuation and Transportation Standards Act)

- Requires FEMA to support state and local governments in animal planning
- Provides reimbursement to states for sheltering and care of household pets and service animals
Results

• Increased state and local planning and preparedness
• Formation of state and local response organizations
• States are better prepared to manage disasters on local and state level
• Work still needs to be done
Disaster response – U.S.

Image: A. Kingsbury, ISU, CFSPH
AVMA VMAT

- Resource for states
- Veterinarians, technicians
- 3 missions
  - Assessment
  - Veterinary medical care
  - Training
Black Forest Fire
Colorado - 2013

Slide: Debrah Schnackenberg PetAid Colorado
Partnerships in Planning and Response

- Government agencies: federal, state
- Regional alliances of state agencies
- NASAAEP
- NARSC
- Response organizations
- NGOs
National Alliance of State Animal and Agricultural Emergency Programs (NASAAEP)

- Association of State-level programs
- Membership
  - Regulatory agencies (Agriculture, Public Health)
  - Emergency Management
  - SART & VMRC-type programs
- Forum for communication, information-sharing and consensus among states
- Best Practices working groups
- www.nasaaep.org
National Animal Rescue & Sheltering Coalition (NARSC)

• American Humane Association (AHA)
• American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA)
• Best Friends Animal Society
• Code 3 Associates
• International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW)
• National Animal Control Association (NACA)

• Society of Animal Welfare Administrators (SAWA)
• Red Rover
• American Red Cross
• NASAAEP
• Petfinder.org Foundation
• Pet Smart Charities
• AVMA
• AVMF

• www.narsc.net
Maintaining Readiness

Exercises

- Opportunity to test plans
- Find gaps
- Familiarize personnel with roles and responsibilities
National Level Exercise 2011

- Earthquake along New Madrid Seismic Zone
- Animal disaster response capabilities
- Federal, state and NGO participation
Multi-jurisdictional Animal Resource Coordination Exercise (MARCE)

- Virtual Exercise
- 24 states participated
- Test states’ abilities to request resources from various sources
- Resources for pets, large animals, captive wildlife, poultry and horses
Training
Superstorm Sandy: West Virginia

Photo: FEMA; N. Lemburg
Colorado Flood Event - 2013

- 1,750 people and 816 pets airlifted out of flooded locations
- Colorado Veterinary Medical Reserve Corps provided support for evacuated pets at the National Guard Helicopter landing zone
- Many different organizations involved in animal search and rescue
Thank you

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