

Wildfires leave behind hungry cattle and downed fences

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Wildfires roared back to life near Aspermont after starting 10 days earlier. More than 122,000 acres have burned in that complex of fires that spread through Stonewall, King and Knox counties.

(Texas AgriLife Extension Service photo by Kay Ledbetter)



AMARILLO – Even if ranchers were able to move their livestock away from the racing flames, damages continue to mount as ashes pile up behind the wildfires that have blackened terrain across the state, according to Texas AgriLife Extension Service personnel.

Whether it is the estimated 2,000 acres in Young County or the 191,000 acres so far in Presidio and Jeff Davis counties, ranchers are losing valuable grass and fencing, not to mention livestock, according to Dr. Andy Vestal, director of the Homeland Security and Emergency Management Program for AgriLife

Extension.

Dr. David Anderson, AgriLife Extension livestock marketing specialist in College Station, said the damages as a result of the wildfires will rise into the millions of dollars as ranchers look at anywhere from \$10,000-\$12,000 per mile to replace fence, and having to feed cattle where pastures were lost.



Jason Miller, Texas AgriLife Extension Service agent in Stonewall County, said he is accepting hay donations at the livestock supply point, but has had some issues with getting transportation for the donated hay. (Texas AgriLife Extension Service photo by Kay Ledbetter)

Almost 1 million acres of Texas has burned recently in the numerous wildfires, according to the Texas Forest Service.

Just how many miles of fence must be replaced in that acreage, as well as how many livestock are injured or dead, might not be known for a week or

more after the fires are all put out, Vestal said.



Riley Barnett, Texas AgriLife Extension Service agent in Fisher County, shows just one example of burned-out fence near Rotan. He said many miles of fence will have to be replaced after wildfires have scorched pastures in many counties. (Texas AgriLife Extension Service photo by Kay Ledbetter)

“Some of these wildfires are still raging and entrance for loss assessment purposes is limited to some extent,” he said.

But AgriLife Extension agents across the state are working with the



Texas Department of Agriculture, Texas Animal Health Commission, Texas and Southwestern Cattle Raisers Association, Texas Independent Cattlemen's Association, Texas Cattle Feeders Association and Texas CattleWomen to set up livestock supply points in five different locations.

The Texas Department of Agriculture recently announced donations can be made also to the State of Texas Agriculture Relief, or STAR, Fund. The STAR Fund may be used to rebuild fences, restore operations and pay for other agricultural relief efforts. Monetary donations can be made by visiting www.TexasAgriculture.gov and clicking on STAR Fund under "Most Popular Links."

The Texas Department of Agriculture Hay and Grazing Hotline is a service also being offered to help locate forage and hay supplies. The online link to it also can be found on the agency's website and clicking on "Disaster Assistance."

Vestal said while hay distribution points have been established and hay is being donated, there's a problem in some areas finding transportation to get hay from the donation location to the livestock supply points.

Individuals willing to help transport hay are also encouraged to contact the different county agents in charge of these livestock supply points, Vestal said.

Those with hay or fencing materials to donate, or with equipment to help haul hay, should contact the following supply points and individuals:

- Tom Green County Livestock Supply Point, 200 West 43rd Street, San Angelo – Steve Sturtz, AgriLife Extension, Tom Green County, 325-659-6524 or 325-895-1063, [ssturtz@ag.tamu.edu](mailto:ssurtz@ag.tamu.edu); or Brittini Kaczyk, San Angelo Stock Show and Rodeo livestock show director, 325-653-5622.

- Eastland County Livestock Supply Point, Eastland County Fairgrounds, 475 Hwy. 3101, Eastland – Brian Perry, Eastland County Livestock Raisers Association president, 245-631-977; or Heath Begeman, AgriLife Extension agent in Eastland County, 254-629-2222 or 254-629-1093, whbegeman@ag.tamu.edu.

- Stonewall County Livestock Supply Point, Stonewall County Fairgrounds, Hwy. 380, Aspermont – Jason Miller, AgriLife Extension agent for Stonewall County, 940-989-3510 or 806-445-5056, jbmiller@ag.tamu.edu; or TSCRA Special Ranger Scott Williamson, 940-889-2269.

- Jeff Davis/Presidio County Livestock Supply Point, Evans Ranch, 1 mile south of Ft. Davis, off Hwy. 118 – Logan Boswell, AgriLife Extension agent for Brewster/Jeff Davis counties, 432-437-6207 or lboswell@tamu.edu; or Jesse Lea Schneider, AgriLife Extension agent for Presidio County, 432-295-0342; or TSCRA Special Ranger Bobby Upchurch, 432-837-2143.

- Pecos County Livestock Supply Point, C&T Feed Store, Hwy. 190 in Iraan – Charlie and Theresa Brown, 432-639-6029; or Norman Fryar, AgriLife Extension agent, Pecos County, 432-336-2541 or mfryar@ag.tamu.edu; or TSCRA Special Ranger Bobby Upchurch, 432-837-2143.

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