



AGRICULTURAL INFORMATION FOR RADIOLOGICAL EVENTS AT NUCLEAR POWER PLANTS

Public Health Concerns

Radioactive material may be released to the environment if there is a serious radiological accident at a nuclear power plant or other nuclear facility. The radioactive material may be deposited on soil, vegetation and surface water. As a result, consumption of contaminated materials may cause concern for public health due to potential long-term effects.

This flyer provides generic information for farmers, ranchers, food processors and distributors concerning protective actions, which will affect their operations.

If such an event occurs, the Texas Department of State Health Services will be issuing health advisories and orders related to the event.

Information about major emergencies at nuclear power plants and other nuclear facilities will be broadcast on radio and television stations. It will also be reported in newsprint.

Livestock

Livestock feeding on contaminated grasses and other growing vegetation will become contaminated. The greatest concern for dairy animals is the potential for contaminated milk

to reach the public. If possible, place dairy animals on stored feed as soon as possible. If this is not possible, continue milking as scheduled, but **DO NOT** market the milk until cleared by the



Texas Department of State Health Services, Milk Group. It may become necessary to destroy the milk.

External contamination of livestock is generally not a threat to either the livestock or personnel moving them about unless they are close to the nuclear facility, where exposure could be greater.



Meat animals that eat radioactively contaminated vegetation may become contaminated internally. This does not necessarily represent a loss of the animal(s). The materials ingested may be short-lived materials that will eventually be processed out of the animal by radioactive decay or by biological elimination. Other materials that are long-lived may pose a threat.

Surface Water

Surface water contaminated from radioactive deposition will need to be sampled to verify it is safe for livestock to drink. Underground sources of water are ideal since they will not be contaminated. Although it is unlikely that surface water impoundments will be contaminated to the extent they are unsafe, surface water sources should be sampled to verify they are safe for drinking.

Evacuated Areas



If an accident involving a radiological release occurs, persons living within an area where evacuation has been recommended should not remain in the area to provide for livestock. They should

evacuate as soon as possible. The concern is the potential long-term effects of radiation exposure to humans.

The Texas Department of State Health Services will provide guidance for those affected so that they will be able to return and care for their livestock.

Persons outside the recommended evacuation area should take the above-mentioned precautions, where possible.

Aquaculture Operations

Affected aquaculture operations will need to be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. If possible, those impoundments should be covered. If not, it may be possible, as in the case of meat animals, to wait for any radioactive contaminants to decay or be eliminated biologically.

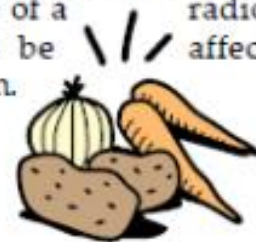
Forage, Food Crops and Produce

There are no general protective measures for forage and food crops. In the event of an emergency that releases radioactive material to the environment, the type and extent of contamination



will be determined by the Texas Department of State Health Services, Radiation Control.

If contamination is suspected, food, forage and produce should be checked for contamination. The Texas Department of State Health Services will work closely with state and county agricultural offices to provide information to farmers and ranchers on how to handle specific crops. Root crops, unless exposed at the time of a radioactive release, will not be affected by surface contamination.



Food Processors and Distributors

Following a radiological emergency, government officials may temporarily restrict movement of milk and food products until they can be inspected. Food products that are contaminated will be withheld from the marketplace. State health and agriculture experts will provide food processors and distributors information on how to safely handle specific food products.



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