

Farm animals on the loose



Loose animals are scared animals and scared animals are dangerous animals. Whether as a result of a livestock truck accident, barn or pasture escape, when farm animals get loose, there is great risk that an animal is going to get hurt or killed, a human is going to get injured and property is going to get damaged. In addition to ensuring public safety, first responders must be increasingly aware of animal care best practices and how their actions will be perceived by the public and shared on social media.



Things you need to know

1. These animals should be considered extremely dangerous. Public safety must always take priority in the situation. If an animal is a threat to the public, it must be euthanized as soon as you can safely do so.
2. Don't escalate the situation, if the incident consists of a few animals standing along a fence line or corral near other animals, they are looking to go back in with their herd mates. Open a gate or find a way for the animals to get back in.
3. Police are in charge of the scene, but they may need to enlist fire departments and professionals from livestock and veterinary sectors with animal handling experience and equipment resources such as penning panels for containment and trailers for transport. Keep a list of local livestock handling resources and contacts on hand.
4. As a containment/transport plan develops, find a safe contained area nearby or paneling to contain the animals. Before approaching the animals, plan containment options such as nearby field or pastures, snow fences for smaller animals; or portable gates from a farm store, sales barn, or fair ground. Your goal is to find materials and areas that are safe for both animals and humans. Keep everyone away from the animal(s) until a plan is established and a containment area can be created or found.
5. Access to a truck or trailer will be required to transport the animal(s) once they are contained. Low slung horse or gooseneck trailers are preferred as they are low to the ground and easier to load animals. Allow the animal(s) time to calm down and then quietly load them into a trailer.

