

Questions and Answers: The National Veterinary Stockpile and Animal Handling Equipment

The National Veterinary Stockpile (NVS) program, coordinated by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, provides support to States, Tribes, and Territories responding to damaging animal disease outbreaks. Within 24 hours, the NVS can provide veterinary countermeasures—including certain types of animal vaccines, antivirals, supplies, equipment, and response services—to animal health officials in affected areas. To learn more about this program, see the NVS factsheet on APHIS' Web site at www.aphis.usda.gov/publications/animal_health/content/printable_version/veterinary_stockpile.pdf.

The NVS can provide a variety of equipment to help maintain safe and effective animal handling during activities needed to address a disease outbreak.

Q. What types of animal handling equipment does NVS keep in its inventory?

A. Our inventory currently includes animal handling equipment appropriate for both cattle and swine operations with fewer than 50 animals. The swine equipment is also suitable for use with sheep and goats. The equipment is designed for containing and restraining livestock to conduct physical examinations, collect samples, and administer vaccines during an outbreak.

Specifically, the cattle handling equipment includes portable self-contained mobile corrals, panels and gates, and squeeze chutes. The swine handling equipment includes working chutes and panels and gates.

All of the equipment is self-contained on trailers and can easily be moved from premises to premises by hitching the trailer to a half-ton pickup truck. The mobile corrals are currently the heaviest piece at 1,200 pounds.

The equipment can be stored outside with minimal maintenance.

Q. What equipment is needed to offload the animal handling equipment?

A. The equipment will typically arrive on a flatbed trailer. A 4,000- to 12,000-pound capacity forklift with 6-foot tines (affixed or as an attachment) is needed to offload and load the equipment.

Q. Can the equipment travel at highway speeds?

A. The animal handling equipment should not be towed at speeds above 50 miles per hour. If higher speeds are required, the equipment should be loaded onto a flatbed or lowboy trailer. These types of trailers are more suitable for transporting the equipment at highway speeds.

Q. Can you provide more details about the mobile corral?

A. The mobile corrals are designed for quick movement between locations. The expandable hinged and wheeled panels can be set up by a team of two to three trained people in less than 15 minutes.

Each mobile corral holds up to 50 head of mature beef cattle.

Q. Can NVS provide equipment for handling larger animals, like bison or large bulls?

A. We can provide equipment for larger animals. Surge contracts are in place with a variety of manufacturers to purchase a full range of animal handling equipment to fit the need of the animal disease event.

Q. Are images of the animal handling equipment available?

A. A photograph of each unit is displayed in the NVS Logistics Catalog. If you are an NVS planner, you may request this catalog by emailing us at nvs@aphis.usda.gov.

Q. If I have questions about the NVS or available animal handling equipment, who should I contact?

A. Email us at nvs@aphis.usda.gov with any questions. More information is also available on our Web site at www.aphis.usda.gov/animal_health/emergency_management/nvs.shtml.

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