

Cattlemen hit hard by Hurricane Ike

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by MEAT&POULTRY Staff

DENVER – Texas and Louisiana cattlemen were hammered by the effects of Hurricane Ike last week, but relief efforts nationwide are underway. A campaign is being spearheaded by the National Cattlemen's Foundation and coordinated by cattlemen's organizations in the affected states.

Only 15,000 cattle have been accounted for out of an estimated 40,000 head in the Texas counties of Jefferson and Chambers. Roaming cattle have no fresh water or feed and there is concern they will have trouble surviving long under current conditions. While troughs for fresh water are an immediate need, new fencing materials will be required in the short term.

Approximately 7,000 cattle are trapped in water or on levies from Cameron to St. Bernard Parishes in Louisiana. Fresh water is a concern there as well, and hay is a critical need to those in Louisiana.

In-state relief efforts are already underway by the Texas and Southwestern Cattle Raisers Association, the Independent Cattlemen's Association of Texas and the Texas Cattle Feeders Association, as well as the Louisiana Cattlemen's Association. The National Cattlemen's Foundation effort is also being coordinated with the National Cattlemen's Beef Association.

"People from all over the country have always been generous when it comes to offering assistance to those farmers and ranchers who have been devastated by Mother Nature," says Bob Josserand, a beef producer from Hereford, Tex., and chair of the National Cattlemen's Foundation Board of Trustees. "We're hoping that will be the case during this devastation to their neighbors to the South."

Tax-deductible contributions can be made to this relief effort through the National Cattlemen's Foundation by calling 866-BEEF-USA (866-233-3782) or by visiting the foundation's Web site at www.nationalcattlemensfoundation.org.

Contributions of hay and fencing and other supplies are also welcome. To make arrangements for hay contributions to Louisiana producers, contact Bob Felknor, executive vice president of the Louisiana Cattlemen's Association, at (225) 343-3491.