

Herd and Environmental Record System - Lite Model

(HERS)

This framework is intended to provide Alberta livestock producers with a means of managing the potential risks associated with environmental (air, water, soil, feed) contamination and their impact on animal health and the economic performance of the herd or flock. The focus of this framework is to encourage and guide producers in documenting all relevant factors in situations where livestock are potentially affected by abnormal environmental conditions.

The suggested documentation procedures are not intended to replace producers' existing record keeping systems. The purpose is to supplement existing record keeping systems and ensure sufficient documentation to properly assess poor performance. It should be noted that this framework is herd-based and is not an individual animal record keeping system. The framework encourages both proactive procedures for recording baseline information on livestock performance as well as procedures for documenting incidences of environmental contamination.

This Lite version is designed to capture the basic elements needed for environmental documentation. Producers wishing to use a more detailed format should consider the HERS Grande model.

LIVESTOCK RECORDS

Date 1st Offspring Born

Number of Live Births

Previous Year's Breeding Dates (Range)

to _____

Average Birth Weight - Females

Average Birth Weight - Males

Castration Procedure

Comments _____

Average Weaning Weight - Females

Average Weaning Weight - Males

Weaning %

Additional Comments

ANIMAL HEALTH PROGRAMS

VACCINATION

Date	Number	Type of Animal	Age	Product Used	Comments

REGULAR TREATMENTS (i.e. external and internal parasites)

Date	Number	Type of Animal	Age	Product Used	Comments

This framework is intended to be a management tool that will guide livestock producers in documenting all relevant factors in both normal environmental conditions and in abnormal environmental conditions.

Abnormal environmental conditions for livestock are defined as situations where there is environmental contamination due to chemical substances in the air, water, soil or feed utilized by livestock. Abnormal environmental conditions can be described as:

1. Acute Incidents; which are defined as short-lived situations with the environmental impact occurring on a relatively large scale. The effect on the animal is immediately evident and there may be long term consequences that become apparent later in the production cycle.
2. Long-Term or chronic exposures; in which the environmental contamination is over an extended period and evidence of the impact is slow to develop.

LAND USE SKETCHES

A land use assessment will include sketches of the property including fields, pastures, water supplies (wells, springs or surface), drainage, topography, farmstead, buildings, confined housing areas, waste disposal sites, etc. and industrial and other development on and around the property that may be a potential source of elements hazardous to livestock. As well, aerial photos, county maps, pictures and other visual items will be very beneficial to documenting land use and potential hazards.

Land Description _____

NORTH

Land Description _____

NORTH

Land Description _____

NORTH

	Environmental Conditions				
Use this space to describe the problem or to make other comments.	Wind direction	Wind speed (calm, light, strong)	Precipitation (type and amount)	Temperature	In the space below, make notes regarding activities or situations that may have contributed to the problem. Include a description (smell, visual, etc.), the source type, and its location related to the animals involved.

Instructions: When any of the problems or symptoms indicated below occur, write in the date in the column to the left and the number of animals affected in the appropriate column below.

Date (month, day, year)	Abortions or stillbirths	Birthing difficulties	Birth Defects	Post partum problems (prolapse, retained placentas, etc.)	Newborn to pre-weaning stresses (e.g. reduced time to recover from castration)	Sudden deaths	Eye problems, runny eyes, pink eye	Runny nose	Coughing	Difficulty breathing, pneumonia	Downer animals, can't get up	Nervous system problems	Reduced appetite	Diarrhea and other intestinal problems	Udder problems	Reduced milk production	Reduced performance (rate of gain, feed conversion, etc.)	Skin problems	Locomotion problems (staggering, stumbling, etc.)	Foot problems (foot rot, founder, crack hooves, etc.)	Behavior changes (Aggression, lethargy, etc.)	Other problems