

Dry Weather Decisions

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The stresses that come from dealing with lack of rainfall, poor crops, and feed shortages all take a huge toll on the people trying to juggle the needs of family, farm and flock. Stress impacts decision-making.

Make decisions for the right reasons

- Buying feed or selling sheep. Decisions need to be based on animal welfare, cash-flow, repayment ability, and business profitability.
- Understanding tax implications. Discuss selling of capital assets, livestock, with your accountant.
- Animal welfare is the responsibility of the flock manager/owner. There is information and assistance available.
 - Alberta Farm Animal Care (www.afac.ab.ca / [403-932-8050](tel:403-932-8050)) The focus of AFAC's work is on early intervention and on taking action to prevent distress in livestock.
 - Livestock Care Alert Line ([1-800-506-2273](tel:1-800-506-2273)) The ALERT line is a confidential call line to report animals in distress, or to assist before livestock is in distress.
 - Canadian Code of Practice for Sheep: <http://www.nfacc.ca>.
 - Alberta Lamb Producers videos: <https://www.youtube.com/user/SheepCentralAlberta> The videos include easily accessible information on animal care, handling, body condition scoring, feeding and flock health.
- People matter.
 - Managers who focus on their strengths are motivated, determined, and make decisions tend to improve their own performance and self-esteem.
 - 'A problem shared is a problem halved.' Having a spouse or partner(s) involved in discussions, problem-solving and decision-making helps reduce stress.
 - Watch for signs of stress:
 - Behaviour changes like irritability, anxiousness, lack of concentration, inability to sleep
 - Withdrawal, reluctance to make medium to long term plans, decision-making grinds to a stop.
 - Use stress relievers like humour, laughter, exercise, deep breathing or maybe meditation. Take a break. Try to get out for some socializing.

For more information:

Managing Business Stress: <http://www1.agric.gov.ab.ca> series includes articles, Agri-Profits, calculators

Alberta Mental Health Help Line: [1-877-303-2642](tel:1-877-303-2642)