



Jackson County 4-H Youth Development

Summer Sun Safety – For You and Your Animals!



Summer is officially here and it is hot!

Camps are underway and our 4-H youth are off and running. With that thought in mind we need to make sure to keep ourselves and our families safe and healthy, along with our pets, livestock and our show animals. Every living thing is affected by heat and humidity in some way, particularly humans and animals, and with heat indexes climbing to well above 100° F, staying hydrated to prevent heat exhaustion or heat stroke and protecting yourself from Ultra Violet (UV) rays with an appropriate sun screen, are of critical importance.

Heat exhaustion can lead to serious consequences, so be aware of the signs.

Heat Exhaustion	Heat Stroke (medical emergency)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Move the victim to a cool shaded area to rest; do not leave him or her alone • Loosen and remove heavy clothing • Give cool water to drink, about a cup every 15 minutes • Fan the person, spray with cool water, or apply a wet cloth to his or her skin • Call 911 if he or she does not feel better in a few minutes • Remove from hot environment work that day 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Get medical help immediately, call 911 • Move the victim to a cool shaded area; do not leave him or her alone • Lay the person down • Loosen and remove heavy clothing • Fan the person, spray with cool water, or wipe with a wet cloth or cover with a wet sheet • Place icepacks under the armpits and in the groin area <p>Image courtesy of Photobucket.</p>

According to the American Cancer Society, protection from the sun is important because Skin Cancer is growing at alarming rates. One in every five Americans will develop skin cancer at some point during their lifetime and that five or more sunburns during your lifetime doubles your risk of developing skin cancer. **(2007 Statistics from the American Cancer Society.)** Sun protection is especially important in children because sunburns in early life can lead to skin cancer in adulthood.

Make sure that you and your furry and feathered friends are protected from the sun and have fresh clean water at all times. Very young animals and older animals are less able to withstand extreme temperatures and are subject to heat exhaustion and stroke just like humans, so it is important to know what to look for.

heat stroke in dogs

a dog's body temperature

- 107–109° heat stroke
- ≈104° heat exhaustion
- 100.5–102.5° normal

signs of heat stroke:

- ⊗ Heavy panting, difficulty breathing, excessive thirst
- ⊗ Bright red tongue and mucus membranes, which turn grey as shock sets in
- ⊗ Thick saliva, drooling, vomiting, and/or diarrhea
- ⊗ Unsteadiness and staggering
- ⊗ Lethargy

By the time the signs of heat stroke are visible, it's often too late.

some dogs are more at risk

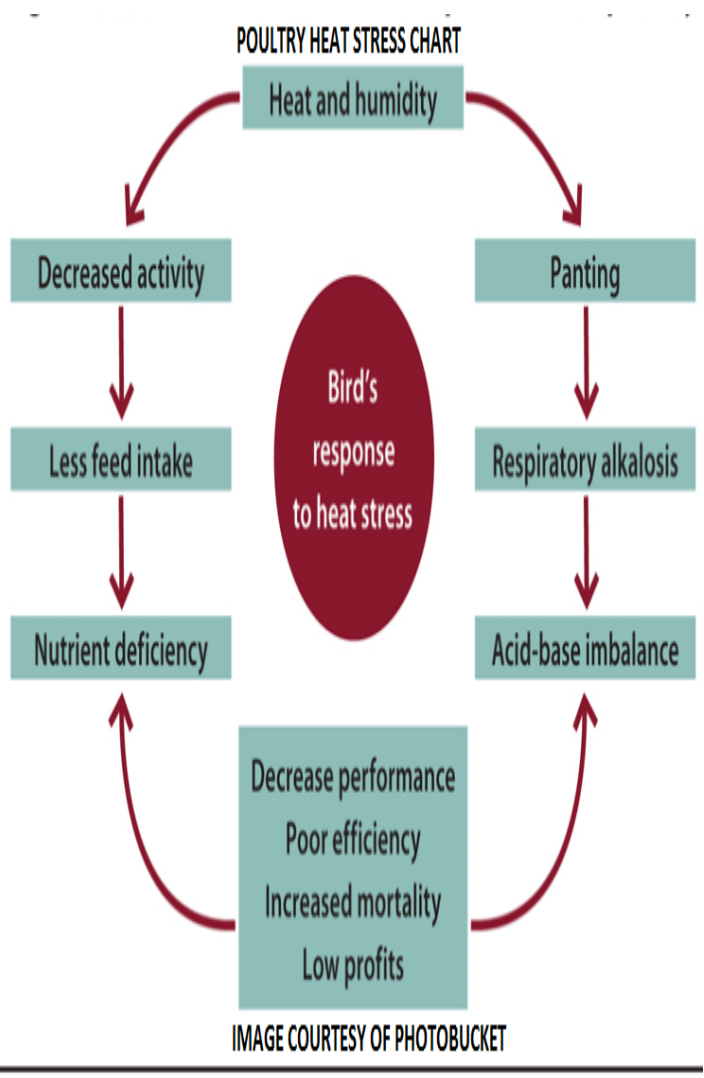
- SHORT-NOSED
- LONG-HAIRED
- YOUNG

the dangers of heat stroke

104° body temp. → >15mins of suffering → [!]

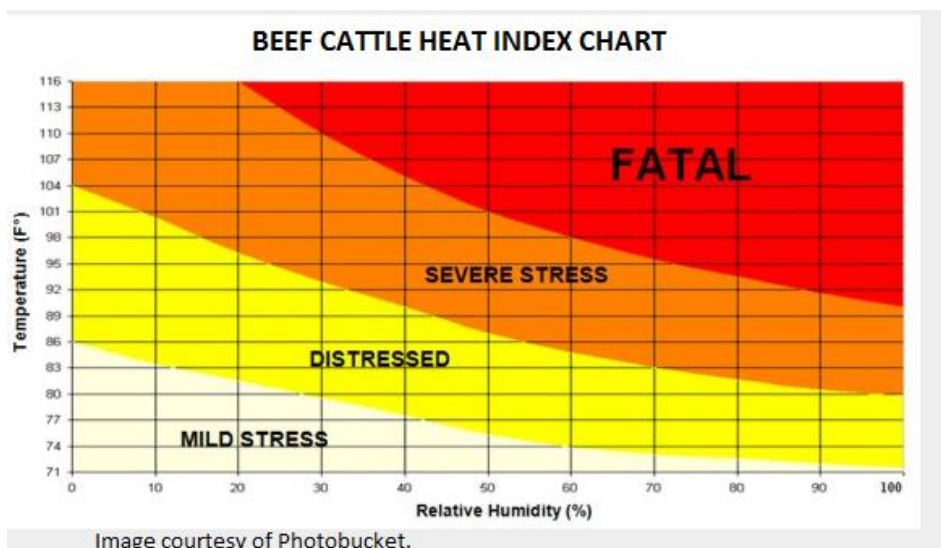
- ✓ Collapse
- ✓ Seizures
- ✓ Coma
- ✓ Organ failure
- ✓ Death

Image courtesy of Photobucket



Shade and shelter from the sun are extremely important. Extra care is needed for animals that are housed in close quarters such as chicks and chickens. Using an inexpensive box fan can be a life-saver for animals in these conditions. Also, animals such as show calves that are being fast-tracked for body condition, need to

be monitored closely. They too can benefit from inexpensive fans that can be hung with bungie cords above their feed bunks. Just make sure that you have the electrical cords secured in such a way as to make them inaccessible by the animal. Heat stress can cause reduced productivity in beef and dairy cattle herds. The effects of severe heat stress are often seen in the form of reduced reproductive performance, reduced daily weight gain of growing cattle and reduced milk production.





The best rule of thumb is to consider how the environment feels to you, and know that it affects your pets and livestock even more than it does you, because they don't have air-conditioning and can't get their own water! So be safe, and keep you and your animal friends safe from the sun and fully hydrated.

For more information regarding heat safety tips, visit:

- The Humane Society of America http://www.humanesociety.org/animals/resources/tips/pets_safe_heat_wave.html
- National Weather Service <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/os/heat/index.shtml>
- American Melanoma Foundation – Facts About Sunscreen <http://www.melanomafoundation.org/prevention/facts.htm>
- Penn State Extension - Heat Stress and Beef Cattle <http://extension.psu.edu/animals/beef/news/2014/heat-stress-and-beef-cattle>

The Jackson County 4-H program is growing more and more every day. If you or someone you know would like to learn more about the Jackson County 4-H Youth Development program, please visit the 4-H Youth Development page at <http://jackson.ifas.ufl.edu/4-h/>.

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