



Tulare County Livestock Pass Program Description

Purpose

The purpose of creating a county-based “Livestock Pass” program is to provide a uniform way of identifying vetted commercial livestock producer owner-operators and managers to firefighting personnel, California Highway Patrol officers, Sheriff’s deputies, other law enforcement officers, and other emergency personnel. Possession of a Livestock Pass during a wildfire or a similar disaster may allow the rancher limited emergency access to restricted areas for the purposes of:

- 1) Feed, water, or care for livestock sheltering in-place or
- 2) Evacuate livestock

Access to restricted areas will be at the discretion of emergency personnel; possession of a Livestock Pass does not guarantee access to restricted areas. The Livestock Pass shall not be used to obtain emergency access to care for pets, collect household items or for any purpose other than those specifically stated above. Livestock Pass cards are intended for distribution to eligible ranchers before a disaster.

Program Administration

The Tulare County Agricultural Commissioner’s office will administer the Livestock Pass program for Tulare County, California. Program administration will include processing applications, confirming eligibility, printing, and distributing Ag Pass identification cards, record keeping, and renewal notification. Tulare County will honor Livestock Passes and Ag Passes issued from other counties in California.

Livestock passes shall have a uniform expiration date of May 31st and are valid for 2 years. Renewal is required to maintain a valid Livestock Pass.

Eligibility

Livestock Passes shall be issued to commercial livestock producers (owner-operators and operation managers). A commercial livestock producer must own at least 25 head of cattle, horses, sheep, goats, or other Livestock permissible by the Agricultural Commissioner’s Office, that reside in Tulare County for at least part of the year. A Livestock Pass shall not be issued to any individual who does not meet the requirements listed above.

Eligibility will be confirmed by one or more of the following:

- 1) Operator identification number issued by a county agricultural commissioner.
- 2) Assessor’s Parcel Number confirming agricultural zoning for the property or properties upon which access is sought.
- 3) Agricultural land lease documentation.
- 4) Williamson Act enrollment documentation.
- 5) Documentation from the USDA Farm Services Agency attesting that the applicant is a commercial livestock producer.
- 6) Current registration of a livestock brand with the Bureau of Livestock Identification; brand inspector may confirm eligibility based on number of cattle owned.
- 7) Letter of Authorization from ranch owner



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To receive a Livestock Pass, each person must sign a liability waiver. A livestock pass may be revoked at the discretion of the Tulare County Agricultural Commissioner. A Pass holder may no longer be eligible to hold a livestock pass if they violate the conditions contained herein or if they refuse or fail to follow emergency personnel instructions. Notification of pass revocation shall be given within 2 weeks of decision.

Application

Each individual interested in obtaining a Livestock Pass shall be required to complete an application through the Tulare County Agricultural Commissioner's Office. A fee may be required at the time of application.

Training

Participation in a 6–8-hour initial training is mandatory to obtain a Livestock Pass. The training curriculum will be approved by the Tulare County Fire Department or conform to California state Fire Marshal requirements. One-hour refresher trainings are required to renew a Livestock Pass. Initial trainings will be online, and the information is provided below. In person initial trainings and refresher training courses may be offered in the future years between January 1 and April 30.

Initial training course:

National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG)
<https://wildlandfirelearningportal.net/login/index.php>
S-190 (Introduction to Wildland Fire Behavior)
6-8 hours (Completion certificate issued)

Conditional Access

Possession of a Livestock Pass does not grant any rights or privileges and does not guarantee the cardholder access behind road closures. Access is at the discretion of onsite emergency personnel and is situation dependent. Access will not be granted outside of daylight hours. All persons must depart the restricted area by the same route as entry. An escort may be required in any instance. Onsite emergency personnel may place a limit on time spent behind any road closure. Evacuating residents and preserving human life takes precedence over livestock evacuation and care.

Insurance and Risk

Access in an area closed to the public during a disaster may affect the coverage of the passholder's property liability insurance, vehicle or equipment insurance, and worker's compensation coverage. Each Livestock Pass holder should be aware that hazardous conditions may exist at any location behind the road closure. Program administrators, collaborators, and trainers shall not be liable for injury or death of any person participating in activities resulting from the inherent risk of entering a disaster area.



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Modifications and Revisions

Modifications and revisions to the Tulare County Livestock Pass program shall be made at the discretion of the Tulare County Agricultural Commissioner's office pending approval and review by the Tulare County Sheriff's Office and the Tulare County Fire Department. All pass holders shall be notified of modifications and revisions and a public comment period of no less than 30 days shall be provided. Notices shall also be sent to the Tulare County Farm Bureau and the Tulare County Cattlemen's Association.

Participating Partners/Agencies

- Agricultural Commissioner's Office – administering office
- County Fire Department - training
- Sheriff's Office and other local law enforcement agencies
- Tulare County Board of Supervisors
- County Counsel
- County Executive Office
- California Highway Patrol
- Tulare County Cal-Fire Unit
- Tulare County Office of Emergency Services

The following entities/agencies may also participate:

- Tulare County Farm Bureau
- UC Cooperative Extension
- Tulare County Cattlemen's Association
- Tulare County RCD
- Tulare County Agricultural Advisory Committee
- US Forest Service
- Tulare County Animal Services

Livestock Pass and Identifying Documents

Each Livestock Pass shall include:

- 1) Pass holder name
- 2) Photo of pass holder (or, [see sentence below](#))
- 3) Ranch/Operation Name
- 4) Expiration Date
- 5) Seal or Logo of authorizing agency and signature of issuing officer

[A Livestock](#) Pass is not valid unless presented with proper government-issued photo ID, including driver's license, Real ID, or military/Gov't issued ID.