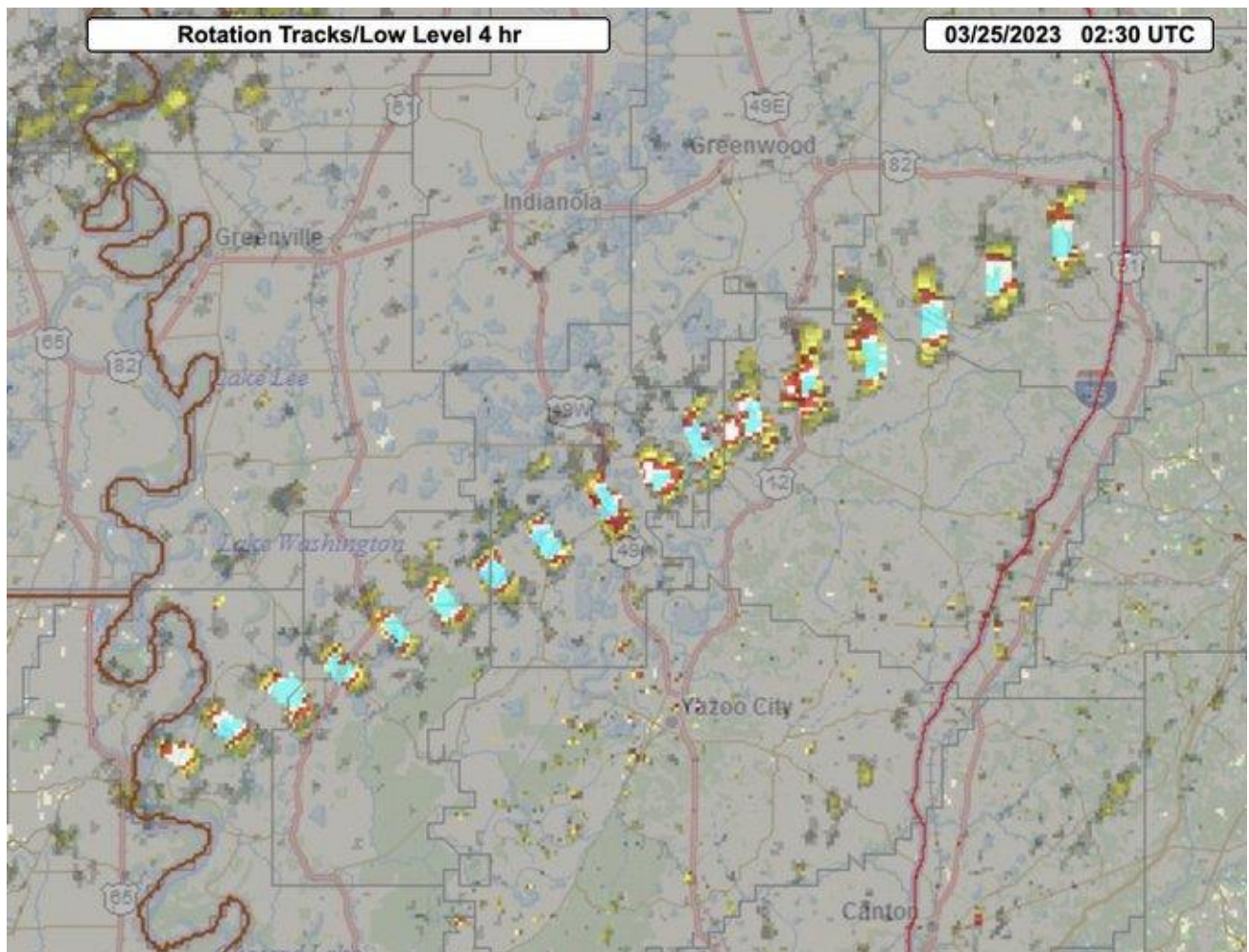


**AVMA 2023 Disaster Situational Awareness Report #2 Tuesday March 28, 2023**  
**Lower Mississippi, Ohio, and Tennessee Valley Tornadoes**

- Friday March 24, 2023, at 8:40 p.m. (CDT) the National Weather Service in Jackson, Mississippi issued a tornado warning for a storm system that was exiting Louisiana and entering Mississippi and heading for Rolling Fork, MS.
- Friday March 24, 2023, at 9:05 p.m. (CDT) the tornado arrived at Rolling Fork, MS a town of about 2,000 people 60 miles NW of Jackson, MS.
- The tornado remained on the ground for the next 90 minutes covering 80 miles heading in a NE direction ending near the town of Winona, MS.
- Debris from the destruction reached 30,000 feet into the air according to a report from the Radar Research Group at the University of Oklahoma.
- Additional tornadoes and other straight-line winds occurred throughout the Southwest.



### Veterinary Response

- The county animal shelter in Monroe County (Amory, MS) took a direct hit from the tornado and the building is structurally unsound. The county is looking for another building to move the animals to. No reports of injured or deceased animal that were housed in the shelter.
- The ASPCA response team has been requested by Monroe County and is currently on the ground. They have also received a request for assistance by Sharkey County and are evaluating that request.
- The veterinary clinic in Amory, MS was not significantly damaged, and the veterinarians are assisting local animals and the animals at the shelter.
- The veterinary clinic in Winona, MS received some minor damage.
- Local veterinary support appears to be able to handle any needed veterinary services.
- [AVMF](#) will work with the veterinarians in Amory and Winona to make sure they can take advantage of disaster grants if applicable.

AVMA provides disaster preparedness, response, and recovery information at <https://www.avma.org/resources-tools/animal-health-and-welfare/disaster-preparedness> including information on grants available from AVMF for veterinarians who are either directly impacted by a disaster or who provide care to animals impacted by disasters.

## USDA Assists Farmers, Ranchers and Communities Affected by Tornado in Mississippi

**WASHINGTON, March 27, 2023** - The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) today announced that assistance is available for communities and agricultural producers affected by the severe weather and tornado that tore through Mississippi on March 25.

“My thoughts and prayers are with all who have lost loved ones in the terrible tornadoes in Mississippi and with the communities who must rebuild their homes and businesses,” said Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack. “Alongside our federal partners, USDA is ready to provide assistance to those impacted by these storms.”

### Food safety guidance:

USDA’s Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) is helping affected residents take steps to reduce their risk of foodborne illness as they return to their homes after severe weather.

- During a power outage, the refrigerator will keep food at a safe temperature (below 40°F) for up to 4 hours. A full freezer will hold a safe temperature for approximately 48 hours (24 hours if it is half full). Discard any perishable food items in the refrigerator and freezer after these timeframes.

For questions about food safety, call the Meat and Poultry Hotline at 1-888-674-6854, Monday through Friday from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. ET (English or Spanish), email [MPHotline@usda.gov](mailto:MPHotline@usda.gov) or live chat at [Ask USDA](#).

## **Risk management and disaster assistance for agricultural operations:**

USDA offers several risk management and disaster assistance options to help producers recover after disasters.

Even before disasters strike, USDA provides tools for producers to manage their risk through the [Federal Crop Insurance Program](#), a public-private partnership between USDA's Risk Management Agency and private companies and agents. For crops that do not have crop insurance available, the [Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program \(NAP\)](#) is available through the local Farm Service Agency (FSA). This risk protection includes crop production loss and tree loss for certain crop insurance products. Producers should reach out to their crop insurance agent or local FSA office for more information.

Producers who suffer losses and are signed up for Federal Crop Insurance or NAP are asked to report crop damage to their crop insurance agent or local FSA office, respectively, within 72 hours of discovering damage and follow up in writing within 15 days.

Producers who have not applied for NAP coverage may still be covered. FSA has [updated NAP](#) to remove barriers and establish procedures through which an underserved producer with a CCC-860, "Socially Disadvantaged, Limited Resource, Beginning and Veteran Farmer or Rancher Certification," on file prior to the applicable NAP application closing date will automatically receive basic coverage for any NAP-eligible crops. Like all NAP-covered producers, underserved producers will still need to file a notice of loss and apply for program benefits.

Livestock and perennial crop producers often have more limited risk management options available, so there are several disaster programs for them. Key programs offered by FSA include:

- The [Livestock Indemnity Program](#) and the [Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybee and Farm-raised Fish Program](#) reimburses producers for a portion of the value of livestock, poultry and other animals that were killed or severely injured by a natural disaster or loss of feed and grazing acres.
- The [Tree Assistance Program](#) provides cost share assistance to rehabilitate or replant orchards and vineyards when storms kill or damage the trees, vines or bushes. NAP or Federal Crop Insurance often only covers the crop and not the plant.
- The [Emergency Conservation Program](#) and [Emergency Forest Restoration Program](#) can assist landowners and forest stewards with financial and technical assistance to restore damaged farmland or forests.

It is also critical that producers keep accurate records to document damage or loss and to report losses to their local USDA Service Center as soon as possible.

Additionally, USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service can provide financial resources through its [Environmental Quality Incentives Program](#) to help with immediate needs and long-term support to help recover from natural disasters and conserve water resources. USDA can also assist local government sponsors with the cost of recovery efforts like debris removal and streambank stabilization to address natural resource concerns and hazards through the [Emergency Watershed Protection Program](#).

On farmers.gov, the [Disaster Assistance Discovery Tool](#), [Disaster-at-a-Glance fact sheet](#) (PDF, 4.6 MB) and [Loan Assistance Tool](#) can help producers and landowners determine program or loan options. For assistance with a crop insurance claim, producers and landowners should contact their [crop insurance agent](#). For FSA and NRCS programs, they should contact their local [USDA Service Center](#).

USDA's Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) is also ready to work with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), and standing by for requests for assistance from states and local authorities, to provide [emergency food](#) to people in need.

USDA touches the lives of all Americans each day in so many positive ways. In the Biden-Harris Administration, USDA is transforming America's food system with a greater focus on more resilient local and regional food production, fairer markets for all producers, ensuring access to safe, healthy and nutritious food in all communities, building new markets and streams of income for farmers and producers using climate smart food and forestry practices, making historic investments in infrastructure and clean energy capabilities in rural America, and committing to equity across the Department by removing systemic barriers and building a workforce more representative of America. To learn more, visit [www.usda.gov](http://www.usda.gov).

Please contact Dr. Warren J. Hess at [whess@avma.org](mailto:whess@avma.org) with corrections or updates.