



*For immediate release:*

## **Be Aware: Animal Care is Everyone's responsibility**

**Calgary, Alta., December 4, 2008:** By far, most livestock owners are attentive to the needs of their livestock and ensure daily care. Unfortunately, a very few don't or cannot and animals can suffer as a result. Poor care can arise from lack of knowledge, life's pressures, old age, sickness, and absentee owners. Financial hardships, coupled with tough winter conditions, add extra challenges.

"Being able to help our fellow producers, before conditions become extreme is beneficial to the animals and the owners," says Doug Sawyer, a beef producer and chair of Alberta Farm Animal Care (AFAC). "AFAC provides a confidential Livestock Care Action Line and Response Team (ALERT) service that strives to nip problems in the bud." **The ALERT line number is 1-800-506-2273.**

"The ALERT line has been operating for 13 years and there are many success stories of how one call has helped many animals and their owners. We only participate based on the consent of the owner. Most are grateful for the assistance," continues Sawyer. "Well guided suggestions are appreciated and animal care improves."

The ALERT line is a confidential help line for anyone to report livestock care concerns. The ALERT line has an on-call veterinarian who provides knowledgeable counsel. The ALERT line is available for self-reporting to assist those who may be experiencing problems in caring for their livestock. The ALERT line resource teams at times work with Alberta SPCA and RCMP.

To increase the awareness of the ALERT line and its benefits, AFAC is featuring a series of radio spots and new lines in media throughout Alberta this winter. The information focuses on basic livestock care in winter, including swath grazing, winter watering, herd segregation and proper transport of livestock.

The ALERT posters are in RCMP detachments, Livestock Identification, auction market offices and other locations in Alberta. For ALERT awareness posters, ad mats or magnets contact AFAC or visit [www.afac.ab.ca](http://www.afac.ab.ca).

AFAC is a livestock based group that promotes responsible animal care.

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