



Black Vultures are an Increasing Problem for Missouri Livestock Producers

Black vultures tend to be more aggressive than turkey vultures.

JEFFERSON CITY —

Black vultures are increasing in number across Missouri and their aggressive nature can cause problems for livestock producers. The Missouri Department of Agriculture has joined with several statewide groups to offer resources to help protect livestock and inform producers of options if livestock loss occurs.

Unlike the less-aggressive turkey vulture, black vultures are known to gang up and prey on newborn livestock. They sometimes attack cows that are ill or giving birth. Producers across the state have reported livestock loss, including small- to medium-sized animals.

Federal Protection

Black vultures are federally protected by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918. This means the birds, their nests and eggs cannot be killed or destroyed unless a permit is obtained. Producers who have a black vulture problem on their farm can receive a permit from [Missouri Farm Bureau](#) to take up to five black vultures annually.

Mitigation Options

Producers should consider several options to protect their livestock from these nuisance vultures.

- Pen birthing livestock near human activity to enable closer observation and a quicker response to problem situations;
- Condense birthing time frame so animals can be closely monitored;
- Place black vulture effigies (replicas) to scare away live vultures;
- Harass and scare black vultures away from your animals. Examples: create loud noises or spray water;
- Use a guard dog to frighten and chase away black vultures

Create a Customized Plan

Producers can request a site visit or technical assistance from officials with USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service – Wildlife Services. Contact USDA-APHIS at (573) 449-3033 (ext. 10) to discuss options, evaluate the situation and schedule time to establish a customized damage management plan.

Loss Coverage

When livestock loss is proven from black vultures, producers can apply for reimbursement for both the cost of the animal and the necropsy.

Apply for the [**Livestock Indemnity Program**](#) through your local USDA Farm Service Agency for the cost of the animal. Payment rates vary by species and age of the animal.

The Missouri Department of Agriculture has funding for [**black vulture necropsy reimbursement**](#). The necropsy must be performed by a licensed veterinarian (or a USDA-APHIS official) within 24 hours of finding the deceased animal.

For more information about black vultures or other programs at the Missouri Department of Agriculture, visit the Department online at [**Agriculture.Mo.Gov**](#).