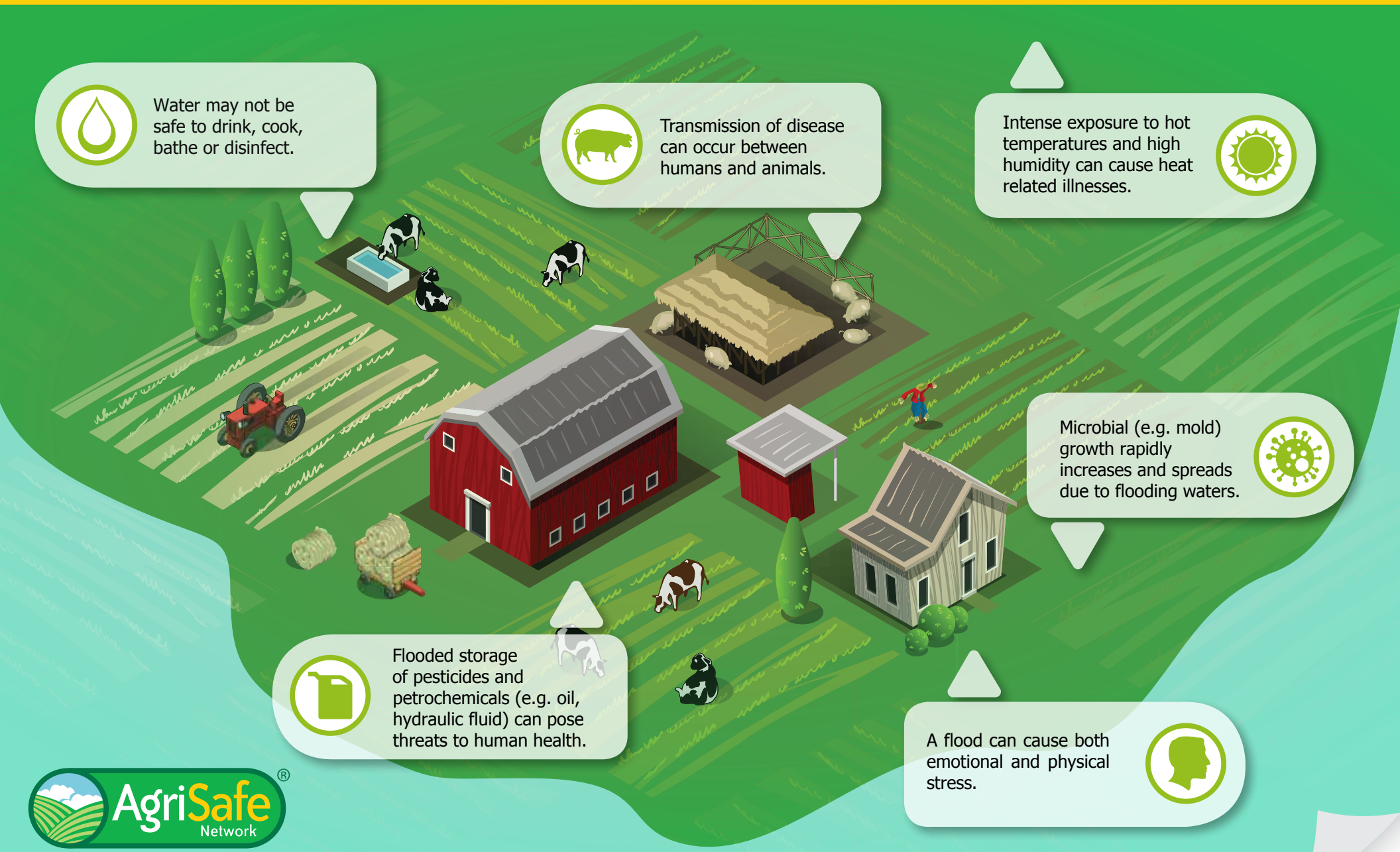
FARM FLOOD HEALTH THREATS

RISK FACTORS DURING RECOVERY



AgriSafe® Network

Protecting the People who Feed the World

RISK FACTORS*

HUMAN & ANIMAL

Floods can potentially increase the transmission of communicable diseases: Water-Borne (Hepatitis A); Vector-Borne (West Nile Virus); Bacterial (Tetanus) spores and Fungal (Histoplasmosis) spores found in dust, dirt, animal droppings and animal carcass.

WELL WATER

Water may not be safe to drink, cook or clean with after a flood. Water can become contaminated with microorganisms such as bacteria, sewage, heating oil, agricultural or industrial waste, chemicals and other substances that can cause serious illness.

CHEMICALS

If a chemical, pesticide or hazardous waste spill occurs, chemicals might be released from barns, homes, and other sources into the environment. Chemical spills could release vapors or chemical fumes. Local and state authorities will provide further guidance.

MOLD

Mold is part of the natural environment. Higher concentrations of mold and bacteria can be found after a flood. This causes the production of Microbial Volatile Organic Compounds (mVOCs), which emit chemical like odors and can become noxious respiratory irritants.

STRESS

After a natural disaster, you're dealing with the extra stress of current conditions, along with the daily stress of farm operations. Natural disasters create a tremendous amount of additional stress and anxiety. You may develop major depression, generalized anxiety, and posttraumatic stress disorder.

HEAT ILLNESSES

Disaster recovery is physically strenuous, especially in hot temperatures. High humidity can boost the temperature by 15-20 degrees or more. Intense heat exposure can cause heat related illnesses. Signs include excessive thirst, weakness, headache, loss of consciousness, nausea and vomiting, muscle cramps, and dizziness.

PREVENTION TIPS

Human & Animal

- Remove standing water
- Use only NIOSH approved N95 (or greater)respirators fitted to your face
- Use watertight, steel toe boots or waders, waterproof, cut resistant gloves
- Follow state guidance on carcass removal

Well Water

- Sample and test the well water
- Conduct well and pump inspection
- Perform emergency disinfection of wells that have been flooded
- Follow health department drinking and bathing advisories

Chemicals

- Wear appropriate clothing including cover-alls, liquid and chemical resistant boots or waders, gloves and safety glasses
- Use only NIOSH approved respirators, such as chemical cartridge respirator for organic vapors with added pre-filter

Mold

- Wear safety goggles
- Use only NIOSH approved N95 (or greater)respirators fitted to your face
- Use water-proof, cut resistant gloves
- Properly ventilate area

Stress

- Be pro-active, recognize potential signs of stress, anxiety, or depression
- Know your local resources, where you can go for help
- Adequate sleep (7-8 hours) is critical to the recovery process

Heat Illnesses

- Take frequent rest/ water breaks
- Wear light colored clothing
- Use the buddy system to identify heat related symptoms
- Use water resistant SPF 30 or higher sunscreen
- Understand signs and symptoms

FACT SHEETS

Zoonotic Disease | EPA Well Disinfection | Respiratory Selection Guide | Mental Health | Heat Illness

This list of risk factors is not exhaustive. For example, other risks may include electric shock, drowning, falls and structural hazards.

FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT AGRISAFE.ORG/FLOODCLEANUP

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