

## Hay, Other Supplies Donated to Islands' Animals

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10/12/2017

As soon as Hurricane Maria devastated both the Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico with category five hurricane winds on Sept. 20, Carolyn Pomeranz, along with Tammy A. Gantt of the Florida Thoroughbred Breeders' and Owners' Association began an effort to get hay and other animal supplies to the devastated regions of the territories as soon as possible.

Gantt got the ball rolling with Pomeranz's guidance. Creech Horse Transportation, Lynn and Chris Boutte and Kim Heath and Debbie Miller became part of the group effort.

Advertising ()



A container of supplies is ready for shipment. (Photo by Finish Line Feed)

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Pomeranz contacted Seminole Feed in Ocala, Florida, which donated 12 tons of hay cubes, which turn into instant hay when water is added. Seminole put Carolyn in touch with Finish Line Feed in Miami. They contacted Triple Crown, which donated six tons of grass forage and dog food.

Finish Line received the donations and prepared them for transport.

Finish Line has taken the lead in receiving other donations for this effort, fielding calls from donors and negotiated shipping rates. They organized shipping and they will receive and load the containers of donations at no cost.

Pomeranz, who moved to St. Thomas in 1963, says “I love the animals and St. Thomas, it’s my home. I love the people. It’s heartbreaking to have everyone go through the hardship. ... We figured that we needed to do something.”

When Lara Halliday gave Pomeranz a call to wish her happy birthday, the project took a new, more meaningful turn. Halliday’s father, Dr. Andrew J. Williamson, was a veterinarian on St. Thomas for more than 50 years. Through Williamson’s contacts, Halliday was able to get in touch with the American Association of Equine Practitioners, American Veterinary Medical Association, American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals and the International Fund for Animal Welfare. The equine practitioners are funding a container shipment, and the 18 tons of donated product will leave via Tropical shipping on Thursday, bound for St. Croix, where it’s scheduled to arrive Monday.

The Department of Agriculture on St. Croix will accept the container and, in conjunction with the ASPCA, will be responsible for distribution of the supplies on St. Thomas, St. Croix and St. John. Pomeranz said of the ASPCA, “They know where the need is.”

The International Fund for Animal Welfare will establish a distribution center at the Department of Agriculture and will also establish small and large animal sheltering, search and rescue, and medical units, an effort that will be managed by ASPCA.



Supplies are loaded in Florida for shipment to the USVI and Puerto Rico. (Photo by Finish Line Feed)