

Animal Production Food Safety & Security Committee April 5, 2005

The Animal Production Food Safety and Security Committee met on Tuesday, April 5, 2005 from 1:30 PM to 5:00 PM CST, during the NIAA 2005 Annual Meeting in St. Paul Minnesota, with 41 people present. Dr. Jerry Gillespie served as the Chair and Dr. Harry Snelson served as the Vice-Chair.

The committee session focused on research and training programs in agro-terrorism. The following speakers presented relevant information updating the progress of these programs.

Jerry Gillespie, Homeland Security Presidential Directives: Homeland Security Directives 7 – 10 have some impact on agricultural activities.

HSPD-8: addresses national preparedness

HSPD-9: designates agriculture as a critical infrastructure

HSPD-10: developing bio-defense methods against bio-weapons

15 vital steps can be viewed at the DHS website.

DHS will coordinate with state and local authorities to develop plans to protect animal agriculture.

Centers of Excellence have been designated at Texas A&M, Univ. of Minnesota, and Univ. of Southern California

Dean Bennie Osburn, Describe activities at University of California : Lead institution is Texas A&M

Proposal to address 4 areas:

1. prevention
2. recognition
3. response
4. recovery

Using 4 disease models: FMD, AI, Rift Valley Fever, Brucellosis (the last 3 are zoonotic)

Areas addressed in the proposal:

1. Rapid diagnostics – for surveillance and monitoring
2. new and improved vaccines
3. host defense mechanisms
4. modeling – GIS, develop economic models, disease management models – useful for exercising plans
5. outreach – farmers, veterinarians, and emergency responders
6. genetic resistance

Research is underway, workshops have been held including one in California regarding carcass disposal.

Networking with other centers for excellence and those outside the centers.

Dr. Will Hueston, National Center for Food Protection and Defense : Threat to food is global

US food supply can be targeted overseas

Food borne illnesses will occur as a result of natural, intentional and accidental exposure

Vision: Defending the safety of the food system through research and education.

Mission:

1. reduce the probability of an intentional attack
2. improve the ability to respond
3. minimize the consequences of an attack

Goals:

1. render targets unattractive
2. rapidly detect attacks
3. minimize consequences of attack
4. effective recovery efforts
5. training responders

University has advantages of being outside the government constraints – allows for collaboration across government agencies and diverse industry and associations.

1. facilitate private discussions with stakeholders and government
2. covers the entire food system
3. focused on catastrophic effects
4. private and academic partnerships
5. professional capacity in food defense

The Center is divided into a number of issue-oriented teams.

Dr. Ron Snyder, Training Frontline Responders to Agro-terrorism Events: Developed a curriculum to provide instructional materials regarding issues associated with agriculture to provide to the community college system to train the trainers associated with first responders.

Dr. Jerry Gillespie, Western Institute for Food Safety and Security (WIFSS): Received an ODP grant for \$4.7 million for a 2 year program to train frontline responders across the entire food system. Broader response than just foreign animal disease issues.

Designing programs specific to local issues.

Complexities:

1. lots of experience in California for responding – evident that better planning would have been helpful during the END outbreak

2. involving multiple government agencies
3. various emphasis on response and impacts at the local level

Immigrants account for 40-80% of agricultural labor force. Have to reach out to this population as they may well be the first to observe a disease introduction or terrorist activity.

It is estimated that a FMD outbreak would cost southern California alone \$4.3 – 13.5 billion

Overall objective is to develop trained teams of certified first responders.

Dr. Heidi Kassenborg, Iowa multistate partnership for security : Received a \$2 million grant from DHS ODP for the consortium.

5 main activities:

1. emergency response coordination
2. Risk communication
3. surveillance
4. communication methods
5. training and education

Developing tools which will be available for all states to access.

Old Business: None

New Business: Resolution action:

- Accepted: 1
- Reaffirmed: 3
- Amended: 1
- Removed: 1
- No action required: 2

General discussion: Dr. John Ragan indicated that the first edition of The Food Digest should be available by this summer.

Committee Session adjourned at 4:45pm.