

Animal Production Food Safety and Security Committee Report

2008 NIAA Annual Meeting

Wednesday, April 2, 2008



The Animal Production Food Safety and Security Committee met on Wednesday, April 2, 2008 from 8:00 am to 11:30 am EST, during the 2008 NIAA Annual Meeting in Indianapolis, Indiana with 39 people present. Dr. James McKean served as the Chair, and Andrew Kennedy served as the Vice Chair; however, Dr. McKean was unable to attend this year's meeting.

The committee session focused on consumer drive in animal welfare and food safety. The following speakers presented relevant information:

Jostein Dragset, Veterinarian Adviser, Animal Welfare and Health, European Commission, presented "European Union: Consumer driven animal welfare and food safety?" Jostein provided valuable insight into the EU in terms of consumer attitudes toward animal welfare and its linkage to food safety, current and pending animal welfare legislation regarding animal welfare and new label and certification programs designed to help consumers identify products made to specific animal welfare standards.

Jennifer Curtis, North Carolina State Center for Environmental Farming Systems (CEFS), presented "Sustainable Agriculture, Animal Welfare and Food Safety." Jennifer provided an excellent window into the future-past of animal agriculture being researched and practiced in North Carolina. Local pasture-raised pork and grass-fed beef were discussed in connection with Whole Foods' "Local Mission" and "Five Step Animal Welfare Premium Program."

Richard LaCalamito, Independent Food Safety Consultant and Auditor, presented "Overview of a Comparison of SQF Program to FDA, USDA, GMA-SAFE HACCP, and PVP." Richard presented the new GFSI/SQF Food Safety and Quality initiative recently mandated by Wal-Mart for its private label suppliers of food. The SQF Standard was developed in Australia in order to gain market access to Asia.

Mike Simpson, Director, Professional Animal Auditor Certification Organization, presented "Farm Animal Care and Auditing: A 10,000 foot view of the present." Mike covered PAACO's training and certification services and the 10,000-foot view of animal welfare and food safety standards by species group.

Old Business: None

New Business:

- Committee member Dr. Pernilla Fajersson requested that we do the following in preparation for the next meeting:
 - Reach out to the committee members well in advance of the next meeting.
 - Organize a "get together" for the committee members the night before the meeting in order to meet other committee members.
- No new resolutions were proposed or accepted.
- No existing resolutions amended revised or removed.

General discussion:

Key issues raised during the meeting included, but were not limited to:

1. With the increasing complexity and variety of food safety and animal welfare standards, audits and label claims, how will producers comply and remain economically viable? Is this an opportunity or threat to the industry? Are niche producers better or worse off in such an environment?
2. The level of vertical integration of a species group is a major determining factor in how mature their food safety and animal welfare programs are in terms of adoption.

Committee Session adjourned at 11:45 am EST.