

animal agriculture

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THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR ANIMAL AGRICULTURE

Better plan needed to protect U.S. agriculture from bioterror attack

WASHINGTON — The United States is vulnerable to agricultural bioterrorism and needs a comprehensive plan to defend against it, says a new report from the National Academies' National Research Council. The United States cannot rapidly detect and identify many pests and pathogens and could not quickly respond to a large-scale attack, which would overwhelm existing laboratory and field resources.

"Biological agents that could be used to harm crops or livestock are widely available and pose a major threat to U.S. agriculture," said Harley W. Moon, chair of the committee that wrote the report, and professor of veterinary medicine, Iowa State University. "Part of the plan to defend against agricultural bioterrorism should be to enhance our basic

understanding of the biology of pests and pathogens so we can develop new tools for surveillance and new ways to control an outbreak."

The committee began its study at the request of the U.S. Department of Agriculture prior to the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks. Those acts and the subsequent anthrax attacks — which showed that "bioterrorism is now a reality," as the report puts it — heightened concerns about an attack on U.S. agriculture. The report says that while a bioterrorism attack on U.S. agriculture is highly unlikely to result in famine or malnutrition, it could harm people, disrupt the economy, and cause widespread public concern and confusion. The recent outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease that arose naturally in the United Kingdom, for example, led to the destruction of millions of animals and cost billions of dollars.

Given the importance of this report to homeland defense, the National Academies took the unusual step of briefing the Office of Homeland Security and USDA on the report's preliminary findings and conclusions. The report also was submitted to USDA and the Office of Homeland Security for a classification review.

At its own discretion, the National Academies decided to remove certain detailed and specific information from the report. An appendix of the material that was removed is not for distribution to the general public.

Nation elevated to high risk security level (orange)

The Department of Justice increased the nation's terrorist threat assessment level to "orange" or high risk on Feb. 7.

"As a result of today's increased security level, foreign animal disease (FAD) surveillance should be increased nationwide," warned a USDA, APHIS, VS, Emergency Management Operations Center (EMOC) bulletin.

"No potential FAD cases should be disregarded. Potential hoaxes should be treated as suspect incursions of FADs until proven otherwise. Specific attention should be directed at livestock and poultry concentration points." Other EMOC suggestions are:

- Investigators and laboratory personnel should implement an appropriate level of personnel protection when examining animals, carcasses, and submitted samples until potentially zoonotic diseases can be ruled out.
- Physical security on farms, livestock concentration points, and quarantine stations should be heightened. Limited animal movements and farm contacts should be kept to essential people for continued operations.
- Early detection remains the key to minimizing the impact of such a disease introduction.

Questions should be directed to USDA, APHIS, Veterinary Services, Emergency Programs, at 301-734-8073, 800-940-6524, or EMOC@aphis.usda.gov.

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"Safeguarding Animal Agriculture", theme of 2003 NIAA Annual Meeting

"Maximum Preparedness — Safeguarding Animal Agriculture" is the theme for the 2003 annual meeting of the National Institute for Animal Agriculture (NIAA).

Scheduled for April 6-10, 2003, at The Westin Hotel in Cincinnati, Ohio, this gathering will include producers, veterinarians, business executives, scientists, academicians, state and federal regulatory officials and other stakeholders in the animal food and fiber industry.

The opening general session will include a number of keynote presentations by homeland security officials, scientists and other pre-eminent agricultural leaders. The program will include Agriculture Secretary Ann M. Veneman; U.S. Customs Service Commissioner Robert Bonner (soon to be Department of Homeland

Security); Charlotte Kirk Baer, director of the Board on Agriculture with the National Academy of Sciences; Dr.



Tom McGinn, director of emergency programs for the North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services and counterterrorism expert Col. John Hoffman, U.S. Armed Services (retired).

NIAA committees will present 15 information-packed seminars addressing the breadth of issues affecting animal agriculture today. Other groups that will hold meetings in conjunction with the NIAA Annual Meeting include the National Assembly of State Animal Health Officials, National John's Working Group and the National Animal Health Emergency Management Steering Committee.

NIAA's mission is to provide forums for building consensus and advancing solutions for animal agriculture and to provide continuing education and communication linkages for animal agriculture professionals.

Registration and program information can be obtained on the Internet at www.animalagriculture.org or by calling 270-782-9798.

NIAA urges continued funding for modernization of USDA animal health facilities in Ames, Iowa

The National Institute for Animal Agriculture (NIAA) is urging members of Congress to support FY 2003 funding in the amount of \$58 million for the USDA Consolidation and Modernization Master Plan.

The facility, when completed, will replace outdated facilities currently used by the USDA Agricultural Research Service' National Animal Disease Center (ARS-NADC), the USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service' National Veterinary Services Laboratories (APHIS-NVSL) and the Center for Veterinary Biologics (APHIS-CVB). "These functions are a critical part of the infrastructure needed to safeguard the health and well being of our domestic livestock populations," stated NIAA Chairman of the Board Dr. Kenneth Olson in a Nov. 14th letter to key congressional members.

The \$58 million amount, which was recommended by the House

Appropriations Committee, is said to represent the halfway point in funding for the master plan. Funding for the master plan was not included in the President's FY'03 budget request.

The funds will be used for partial construction of a biosafety level 3 (BL3) high security laboratory that will enable USDA scientists to work with pathogens that require higher levels of security. Many of these pathogens are potential bioterrorism agents or are economically significant animal diseases. The facilities will enhance U.S. preparedness for an agroterrorism or bioterrorism emergency.

"In light of the tragic events of Sept. 11, 2001, the anthrax attacks in the past year, and the emergence or reemergence of serious animal diseases domestically and among our trading partners, it is even more imperative that we have a facility that will meet the urgent national needs for research, diagnosis and product

evaluation related to animal health," said Olson.

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USAHA supports national animal identification work plan



Neil Hammerschmidt, chair, NIAA Animal Identification and Information Systems Committee, unveils the work plan at the 2002 USAHA meeting.

A national animal identification work plan, developed by a task force representing more than 30 livestock organizations, was accepted through a unanimous resolution at the meeting of the U.S. Animal Health Association (USAHA) Committee on Livestock Identification Oct. 23 in St. Louis.

This support by USAHA is a positive step toward the establishment of a national identification program and system for U.S. animal agriculture, according to Neil Hammerschmidt, chair of the National Food Animal Identification Task Force. "For the first time, we have a work plan that we can build from. The resolution requesting the USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) to use the work plan as a guide for the development of a national program is significant because several species groups brought it forward as a united industry on this issue," he said.

The task force, coordinated by the National Institute for Animal Agriculture (NIAA), spent six months developing the "National Identification Work Plan." More than 100 representatives of animal agriculture served on the task force and contributed to its five working groups: animal disease management, mar-

ketability, standards, producer concerns, and funding, authority and oversight. The task force mission is to ensure the United States has an adequate animal identification system that supports the financial viability of animal agriculture. It believes that an animal identification system is needed to maintain the health and biosecurity of the U.S. herd.

ID task force member Gary Wilson, who currently chairs the National Cattlemen's Beef Association cattle health committee, shared his producer perspective with members of the USAHA livestock identification committee. Wilson already uses individual identification with his 50-head purebred Angus herd on his Ohio farm and believes it's a valuable tool. But before livestock producers are asked to put another tag on their animals, he would like to see an identification system developed that will both accommodate the gathering of data and be industry driven.

"It's important that the national ID system evolves and moves forward," Wilson said. "It has to be accurate, it has to be effective and it has to be affordable for producers. Within the beef industry we have a lot of issues and a number of producers who don't tattoo or tag their cattle. It will take some education to resolve these issues and move forward."

John Wortman, chair of the USAHA Livestock Identification Committee, said that, thanks to the ID task force's efforts, industry groups are ready to work more closely with the USDA-APHIS and state animal health officials to refine the animal identification systems necessary to maintain animal disease programs in the United States. USAHA is a national non-profit organization working with state and federal animal health officials, practicing veterinarians, livestock producers, and research scientists to control livestock diseases in the United States.

The USAHA resolution calls for the establishment of a joint federal and state government and industry animal identification development team. This team is to use the work

plan as a guide to develop an identification system that will enhance animal disease monitoring, surveillance, control and eradication in the United States.

The ID task force determined that a 48-hour traceback capability is the ultimate goal of a national ID system, especially in the event of a foreign animal disease outbreak in the United States. It concludes that a national ID system should have the capability to identify all premises (livestock operations, feedyards, markets, or other stops in the marketing chain) that had direct contact with a diseased animal within two days after discovery. It recommends that movement of individual animals or units of animals be recorded into a central database, or a seamlessly linked database infrastructure.

The ID task force recommends the integration of radio frequency identification (RFID) technology as the most feasible means to achieve a 48-hour traceback system.

The National Identification Work Plan outlines a phase-in program. Phase I, for example, would implement a National Premises System. Phase II would implement individual ID, where animals would have an official tag with a unique visual animal identification number, and later progressing towards RFID. A group or lot ID number would be used for market swine identification. In phase III, a system to report animal movements would be implemented.

Industry organizations and other stakeholders will have an opportunity to review and comment on the National Identification Work Plan through March 2003. "This will allow livestock organizations time to review the plan at their respective conventions, board and committee meetings and to gather producer feedback," Hammerschmidt said.

To request a copy of the 34-page "National Identification Work Plan," contact the National Institute for Animal Agriculture at (270) 782-9798, or you can review it on the Internet at www.animalagriculture.org/id.

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Bush signs legislation creating Department of Homeland Security

A new federal Cabinet department to oversee and coordinate efforts to protect the U.S. from terrorist attacks became legal reality with President Bush signing legislation mandating its creation on Nov. 25.

The Department of Homeland Security brings 22 government agencies, with a combined annual budget of some \$40 billion, under one administrative umbrella.

"Today we're taking historic action to defend the United States and protect our citizens against the dangers of a new era," Bush said at a White House ceremony. "With my signature, this act of Congress will create a new Department of Homeland Security, ensuring that our efforts to defend this country are comprehensive and united."

The signing was the culmination of months of rancorous debate in Congress over the department's creation. It marked the start of a one-year organizational effort to bring the new entity into full operation.

The establishment of the Department of Homeland Security is the biggest reorganization of the federal government since creation of the Department of Defense in 1947.

Among the 22 agencies scheduled for inclusion are the Coast Guard, Border Patrol, Secret Service, Federal Emergency Management Agency and the recently created Transportation Security Agency, which is responsible for airport security.

Those agencies will continue to perform their duties before they completely join the new agency and will continue to do so after the transition period.

Bush has chosen former Pennsylvania Gov. Tom Ridge to head the new entity, and Navy Secretary Gordon England will be the department's deputy secretary.

"This new agency will bring together federal resources, including

USDA's border inspection and protection services, to ensure the safety and security of food, livestock and agricultural production," said Agriculture Secretary Ann M. Veneman. "USDA will work very closely with the new Department of Homeland Security to ensure a swift, efficient and responsible transition."

CAST issues report on biotechnology in animal agriculture

The Council for Agricultural Science and Technology (CAST) has released a scientific paper that provides policymakers and others with an overview of existing and emerging biotechnologies in animal agriculture. Written by a task force of nine scientists and three reviewers, the new issue paper suggests that research on biotechnology in animal production is leading to breakthroughs on many fronts, which raises questions of the comparative risks and benefits as well as ethical considerations.

Consumers, farmers, and the environment have the potential to benefit from this research, according to Terry D. Etherton, Department of Dairy and Animal Science at Pennsylvania State University, and chair of the CAST task force.

"Scientists have been making impressive strides in developing animal biotechnologies," Etherton says. "Some of the newest approaches involve animals as sources of pharmaceuticals for human medicine or of organs for people awaiting transplants. Then there is the issue of animal biotechnology helping to maintain food safety or contributing to farming practices that are economically and environmentally more sustainable."

The CAST paper, *Biotechnology in Animal Agriculture: An Overview*, (Issue Paper 23) addresses several aspects of animal biotechnology and attempts to increase public understanding on related scientific, economic, legislative, ethical, and social issues.

The complete text of Issue Paper 23 is available at www.cast-science.org along with other CAST scientific publications. This paper is the first in a series on the topic "Animal Agriculture's Future Through Biotechnology."

CAST is an international consortium of 37 scientific and professional societies. It assembles, interprets, and communicates science-based information regionally, nationally, and internationally on food, fiber, agricultural, natural resource, and related societal and environmental issues to its stakeholders—legislators, regulators, policymakers, the media, the private sector, and the public.

USDA marks progress on BSE prevention action steps

The U.S. Department of Agriculture more than tripled the number of cattle it tested for bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) during the last fiscal year and has made significant steps on other prevention measures aimed at keeping the disease from entering the United States.

"We remain vigilant at strengthening programs to keep BSE out of this country," said Agriculture Secretary Ann M. Veneman. "Our surveillance level far exceeds international testing standards and is just one component of a multi-faceted regulatory and compliance system that is keeping the United States free of BSE."

In fiscal year 2002, USDA tested 19,990 cattle for BSE using a targeted surveillance approach designed to test the highest risk animals, including downer animals (animals that are non-ambulatory at slaughter), animals that die on the farm, older animals and animals exhibiting signs of neurological distress. During FY 2001, USDA tested 5,272.

Both figures are significantly higher than the standards set by the Office International des Epizooties (OIE), the standard setting organization for animal health for 162 member

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nations. Under the international standard, a BSE-free country like the United States would be required to test only 433 head of cattle per year. The USDA is now testing 41 times that amount.

In addition to surveillance, OIE guidelines also require a risk analysis and management strategy, an education and awareness program and compulsory notification requirements in order for a country to claim that it is BSE free. The United States exceeds these criteria in all categories.

In November 2001, Harvard University published a landmark three-year risk analysis on BSE, representing the most comprehensive risk assessment ever done on BSE. The detailed assessment showed that the occurrence of BSE in the United States is highly unlikely.

WHO publishes guidance to minimize terrorist threats to food

The World Health Organization (WHO) recently announced that it has published guidance intended to help national governments establish mechanisms, which will minimize potential terrorist acts against food supplies. The document, entitled "Terrorist Threats to Food: Guidance for Establishing and Strengthening Prevention and Response Systems", is available at the following website: www.who.int/fsf.

The document examines means of establishing basic prevention, surveillance and response capacities. Because both unintentionally and deliberately caused outbreaks of foodborne disease may be managed by many of the same mechanisms, the WHO recommendations concentrate on working with national governments on integrating terrorism prevention and response measures into existing national food safety and disease surveillance programs.

Federal plan to expand genetic testing of sheep

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service has announced that it is expanding the use of genetic testing for determining which scrapie-exposed animals can move in interstate commerce.

Up to now, reclassifying exposed animals for movement based upon genotype has been limited to states that had signed pilot project agreements with APHIS. Now, all states will be able to use flock cleanup plans based on genetic testing.

The plans will allow owners to retain or sell exposed animals from infected or source flocks without restriction if they have met certain criteria and if genetic testing confirms that these animals are scrapie resistant. Genetic resistance is found by testing an animal's DNA to determine the amino acid that it codes at two specific locations, codon 136 and codon 171.

The plan calls for all sexually intact sheep not being moved directly to slaughter to be genotyped for scrapie resistance. Genetically susceptible exposed female animals and in rare cases, genetically less susceptible exposed female sheep will be removed under indemnity or permanently restricted to the premises. More specific information can be found at www.aphis.usda.gov/vs/naahps/scrapie.

To comply with conditions of the genetics-based cleanup, a post exposure management and monitoring plan will be required. The monitoring plan requires the following:

- Official identification of sexually intact animals that are sold or acquired;
- A record of any persons from whom sexually intact animals are acquired or to whom they are sold;
- Reporting of any deaths of mature animals and animals showing clinical signs and;
- Annual inspections.

All female genetically susceptible

exposed animals, all those who test positive and the female offspring of positive animals must be removed from the flock. Flocks that remove all susceptible female animals will not be considered exposed flocks once they have completed the flock cleanup plan. Flocks not removing all susceptible female animals will still be considered exposed. Accordingly, until the monitoring plan is completed, these flocks will have restrictions placed on susceptible animals in the flock and such animals born or brought into the flock.

To help explain the new plan, the National Institute for Animal Agriculture, through its National Scrapie Education Initiative and in cooperation with APHIS, has released a brochure entitled, "The ABCs of Genetic Based Flock Clean-up and Monitoring Plans." The brochure is available on the Internet at www.animalagriculture.org/scrapie, or by calling NIAA at 270-782-9798.

Progressive Farmer names APHIS employees "People of the Year"

Employees of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service have been awarded the prestigious People of the Year Award by *Progressive Farmer* magazine.

For the first time in its history, the century-old publication has awarded, not one individual, but all 8,700 employees of APHIS for their service to American agriculture.

APHIS is responsible for protecting U.S. crops and livestock from pests and diseases and for monitoring and promoting wildlife management and animal welfare. APHIS employees in the United States and in foreign countries are an integral part of USDA's efforts to provide the nation with safe, affordable food and contribute to the improvement of agricultural productivity, the national econo-

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Poultry industry briefed on outbreak of exotic Newcastle disease in California

Exotic Newcastle disease (END) has become an issue of critical importance for the poultry industry since its detection late last year in a backyard flock in California, speakers said at the 55th Annual International Poultry Exposition, held recently in Atlanta.

As of Jan. 24, END had been confirmed in six of California's commercial layer flocks. Three of the confirmations have been traced to fighting birds in backyard flocks and two to movement of people and trucks. Nearly 2.0 million hens have been ordered destroyed.

With nearly half of California's commercial laying operations located in the quarantined portion of southern California, the concern is that the situation is going to get worse before it gets better. California state veterinarian Dr. Richard Breitmeyer told those at the International Poultry Exposition educational program that the next few weeks will be very telling and should provide a good indication of just how extensive the outbreak will likely be. The incubation period for END in chickens is two to six days.

END is one of the most infectious poultry diseases in the world and is so virulent that many birds die from the disease without displaying any clinical signs, with a death rate that is often 100 percent. A major outbreak in Southern California in 1971 led to destruction of 12 million birds, an eradication response that cost \$56 million.

Breitmeyer said the extent of the situation in California has caught everyone a bit by surprise. Prior to the outbreak, he said, no one had a good handle on the size of the state's backyard flock sector.

"We knew it was there but we didn't know how big it was," he said. At the very least, it is estimated there are 3 million game birds in California belonging to some 50–60,000 different owners. Under California law, ownership of game birds is legal but fighting of the birds is illegal. Even so, Breitmeyer said, bird fighting is an

accepted practice among certain cultures. It is such an accepted practice that authorities in California have actually had to break up two bird fights being staged on quarantined sites.

Other complicating factors for authorities and inspectors, said Breitmeyer, have been the number of loose birds in the quarantined areas that must be captured and the language barrier that exists between bird owners and inspectors.

Breitmeyer's advice to operators of commercial poultry complexes is that they assume everyone coming to work each day has been exposed to END. Given the current situation, he said, it would be difficult for employees not to have been exposed to the disease. He recommends that commercial operators require all employees to shower in. "Biosecurity is extremely important," he said.

"Our commercial poultry flocks are at a very high risk right now," said Breitmeyer. He pointed out that it is for that very reason that the industry must act now to improve its biosecurity efforts.

The place to start, Breitmeyer said, is for each commercial poultry producing state to get a handle on its game fowl industry. "Until we started looking, we simply didn't know the scope of this industry," he said. He encouraged other state veterinarians in the audience to lead this charge in their respective states.

In addition, a long-term disease-prevention strategy with Mexico must be developed, said Breitmeyer. "We need to stop sharing this disease," he said.

Vaccination for END is another area that Breitmeyer said deserves some immediate attention. While the value of the practice has long been debated, he said it is time for some extensive research in this area.

W. Ron DeHaven, deputy administrator of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, suggested that a

good place to get a handle on the extent of the backyard flock population in a certain region is to check with the local feed store. Likewise, he said, feed stores play an important role in getting the word out to urban folks on the risks associated with END and the prevention practices that should be followed to reduce those risks.

The U.S. Postal Service and commercial airlines, DeHaven said, also are cooperating and have halted shipments of birds. Previously, the postal service had been a major carrier of birds.

The International Poultry Exposition is sponsored annually by the U.S. Poultry & Egg Association. It is the world's largest display of products, services, and technology for the poultry and egg industry.

What we know...

- Over 1,327 people are working in Southern California to eradicate the disease.
- 11,173 premises have been quarantined. Investigations are ongoing.
- 1,895 of these premises contained birds infected with or exposed to END. 15 of these are commercial poultry facilities.
- All affected premises are being cleaned and disinfected after the birds have been removed.
- 2,141,560 birds have been humanely destroyed.
- Owners are being compensated at "fair market value" for birds that are destroyed.
- Owners will be allowed to restock birds after there is no risk of them being reinfected with END.
- Exotic Newcastle disease is not a public health threat and does not affect the safety of poultry or eggs.
- Poultry species includes chickens, turkeys, ducks, geese, grouse, partridges, pheasants, quail, guinea fowl, pea fowl, doves, pigeons, swans and rats.

Source:
California Department of Food and Agriculture (02/20/03)

END also diagnosed in Arizona, Nevada

The entire western seaboard of the United States is keeping a watchful eye as exotic Newcastle disease (END) has made its way from California to Arizona and Nevada.

On Jan. 16, END was confirmed in a backyard flock in Las Vegas, Clark County, Nev. The flock was quickly depopulated and officials with the Nevada Department of Agriculture and the U.S. Department of Agriculture mobilized units from several local, state, and federal agencies to conduct surveillance efforts and combat further spread of the disease.

To date, officials have detected the disease on a total of 7 different properties in the North Las Vegas area and depopulated 1,670 birds on 96 properties. Going door-to-door, surveillance teams are making direct contact with more than 900 residents daily to inform them about the disease.

All of Clark and a portion of Nye County are quarantined because of END. However, on Feb. 4, state officials announced it was easing restrictions placed on pet store owners. "We have determined that there is minimal risk of spreading exotic Newcastle disease from commercial pet stores," said Nevada state veterinarian Dr. David Thain. "We're optimistic that our prompt response to the outbreak will enable us to contain the disease to a 14-square-mile area of Clark County."

While restrictions were being eased — in part — in Nevada, animal health officials in Arizona announced that a backyard flock at the Colorado River Indian Reservation tested positive for END. Thus far, it appears to be contained to the Indian reservation. "The Department of Agriculture has done an outstanding job at quickly containing this outbreak," said

Arizona Governor Janet Napolitano. "Their efforts have helped to prevent it from becoming a statewide problem."

Governors in Arizona, California and Nevada have each issued a state of emergency in their states to mobilize and coordinate various agencies and resources. The emergency declarations also make their states eligible to receive federal aid. In addition, USDA has declared an "extraordinary emergency" in each of the states and has detailed hundreds of veterinary medical officers based throughout the U.S. to help state officials contain the disease.

Oregon, Washington and other states in the region have beefed up surveillance in poultry and have issued emergency quarantines that ban the importation of birds and materials from all affected areas.

Better plan needed to protect U.S. agriculture

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Although USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service has several emergency plans for dealing with the unintentional introduction of plant and animal pests and pathogens, the committee could not find, as of last spring, any publicly available in-depth national plan to defend against the intentional introduction of biological agents in an act of terror. The committee also said that significant gaps exist in U.S. knowledge about foreign pests and pathogens.

A comprehensive plan to counter agricultural bioterrorism should define the role each federal and state agency will play in preventing and responding to an attack and how they will cooperate with one another, the report says. The agencies involved also should develop a consensus list of biological agents that could potentially be used in an attack. The agencies should further agree to a shorter list of agents -- representative of various types of agents and the plant or animal species they would target -- for which preparations can be made.

Developing countermeasures for this subset of agents would be valuable to officials and front-line personnel in the event of an attack, even if the agent ultimately confronted does not happen to be on the short list.

In addition, credible spokespeople are needed and potential attack scenarios should be developed for training purposes. The report recommends building upon USDA's current emergency plans for coping with unintentional introduction of pests and pathogens, but emphasizes that the new plan must be designed specifically for terrorist threats.

As part of the plan, the United States needs to create a network of laboratories to coordinate the detection of bioterror agents in the event of an attack. USDA appears to have budgeted for such a network in the next fiscal year, the committee said. A nationwide agricultural bioterrorism communication system, modeled after the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's "Health Alert Network," also is necessary. And new

technologies are needed to aid in the early detection of bioterror agents, especially genetically engineered ones. Early detection is key to stopping the spread of an agricultural bioterror attack.

The report was already in final stages of preparation when President Bush called for transferring the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service to the proposed Department of Homeland Security, so the committee did not analyze the significance of such a move.

The study was sponsored by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The National Research Council is the principal operating arm of the National Academy of Sciences and the National Academy of Engineering. It is a private, nonprofit institution that provides science and technology advice under a congressional charter.

Printed copies of "Countering Agricultural Bioterrorism" are available for purchase from the National Academy Press Web site, www.nap.edu, or by calling (202) 334-3313 or 1-800-624-6242.

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my and public health.

"Our dedicated employees work diligently to ensure that the safety of agriculture and agricultural products is a top priority," said APHIS Administrator Bobby R. Acord. "All of us at APHIS are very proud to receive this distinguished honor."

Progressive Farmer will present APHIS with the award at a ceremony celebrating the agencies' achievements over the past two years.

FDA proposes regulation requiring domestic, foreign facilities to register

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is proposing a regulation that would require domestic and foreign facilities that manufacture, process, pack, or hold food for human or animal consumption in the United States to register with FDA.

The proposed regulation would implement the Public Health and Security and Bioterrorism Preparedness and Response Act of 2002 (the Bioterrorism Act), which requires domestic and foreign facilities to register with FDA by Dec. 12, 2003, even in the absence of final regulations. Registration is one of several tools that will enable FDA to act quickly in responding to a threatened or actual terrorist attack on the U.S. food supply by giving FDA information about such facilities.

FDA says that in the event of an outbreak of food-borne illness, such information will help the agency and other authorities determine the source and cause of the event, and enable FDA to notify quickly the facilities that might be impacted by the outbreak.

The entire proposed regulation can be viewed on the Internet at www.fda.gov/ohrms/dockets/98fr/03-2443.htm. Submit written or electronic comments by April 4. Written comments on the information collection provisions should be submitted by March 5.

USDA recruiting veterinarians, technicians for Newcastle disease eradication

The Veterinary Services branch of the Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service is recruiting nonfederal veterinarians and veterinary technicians to assist in the exotic Newcastle disease eradication program in California and other western states.

The volunteers would become Veterinary Services employees for 23 to 60 days to assist in the program, and would join the agency's National Animal Health Emergency Response Corps. Veterinary students can qualify as veterinary technicians and be mobilized.

The program's purpose is to enroll veterinary personnel interested in serving as VS employees in the event of an outbreak or other animal disease event, to preprocess some of their administrative paperwork for employment, to include them in training opportunities, and to better disperse VS program information.

According to Dr. Ty Vannieuwenhoven, 365 veterinarians and 70 veterinary technicians have registered to be NAHERC volunteers, but more are needed, and there is a particular shortage of technicians.

Over the past two years, veterinary professionals enrolled in this program have assisted the United Kingdom with its foot-and-mouth disease outbreak, and Virginia with its low-pathogenic avian influenza control program. More than 250 NAHERC members have responded to requests for assistance and been activated so far.

Individuals interested in the program should contact their Veterinary Services area office, listed on the APHIS Web site at www.aphis.usda.gov/area_offices.htm. Other questions can be addressed to EmergencyVMO@aphis.usda.gov.

Dolly, world's first cloned mammal, dies

Scotland's Roslin Institute announced the death of Dolly, the first animal cloned from an adult cell, on Feb. 14. The now famous sheep was euthanized by veterinarians after discovering she was suffering from a progressive lung disease, Sheep Pulmonary Adenomatosis (SPA), a virus-induced lung tumor.

"Sheep can live to 11 or 12 years of age," said the Institute's Dr. Harry Griffin, "and lung infections are common in older sheep, particularly those housed inside."

The first mammal cloned from an adult cell, Dolly's birth in July 1996 revolutionized scientific thinking about animal development.

"A full post mortem is being conducted and we will report any significant findings," said Griffin.

The Roslin Institute said Dolly has been promised to the National Museum of Scotland in Edinburgh and will be put on display in Edinburgh in due course.

Great Britain regains FMD-free status

More than a year after Great Britain experienced its worst outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease, the U.S. Department of Agriculture has added the island nation comprising England, Scotland, and Wales, and the Isle of Man to the list of regions considered to be FMD-free.

This action relieves certain FMD-related prohibitions and restrictions on the importation of ruminants and swine and fresh (chilled or frozen) meat and other products of ruminants and swine into the United States from Great Britain.

APHIS will continue to prohibit importation of live ruminants from Great Britain due to the known presence of bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) in that country.

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California llama producer to head USAHA

Bob Frost, a llama producer from Lincoln, Calif., was elected president of the United States Animal Health Association at its 106th annual meeting in October. USAHA is an organization of state and federal animal health officials, practicing veterinarians, research scientists and livestock producers.

More than 1,000 people -- a record number -- attended the week-long meeting to discuss issues related to the health of farm livestock, wildlife, poultry and fish. Chronic wasting disease (CWD) of deer and elk was a featured topic at this year's general scientific session as well as at several of the Association's 30 standing committee sessions.

President-elect of the organization is Dr. Donald H. Lein, formerly with Cornell University's veterinary diagnostic laboratory. Other officers are Dr. Richard D. Willer, Arizona state veterinarian, first vice-president;

Dr. Bret Marsh, Indiana state veterinarian, second vice-president; Dr. Lee M. Myers, Georgia state veterinarian, third vice-president; and Dr. Jones Bryan, retired South Carolina state veterinarian, treasurer. Dr. Maxwell Lea, Louisiana state veterinarian, is immediate past-president.

Bush administration budget proposes record spending for agriculture

Agriculture Secretary Ann M. Veneman has released details of the Bush Administration's proposed FY 2004 budget for USDA programs and services, which includes record spending for farm conservation measures, food safety protections, and nutrition and food assistance programs. The \$74 billion request is 2 percent, or \$1.4 billion, higher than the previous year.

The budget seeks record-level support for meat and poultry food safety programs as well as increases

to strengthen agricultural protection systems. FSIS funding will increase to a program level of \$899 million, an increase of nearly \$42 million over FY 2003 and represents a \$117 million increase in food safety programs since FY 2001.

Regarding homeland security and agricultural protection programs, the budget includes nearly \$47 million in new funding to strengthen laboratory security measures; conduct research on emerging animal diseases; develop new vaccines; create new biosecurity database systems; and continue development of the unified Federal-State Diagnostic Network for identifying and responding to high risk pathogens.

The Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service would receive a \$30 million increase for inspection services, expanding the availability of foot-and-mouth disease vaccines, providing protection against chronic wasting disease and poultry diseases, and expanding diagnostic and other scientific/technical services.

APHIS seeks rulemaking on handling of dead stock, downers

USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service has issued an Advanced Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (ANPR) to help develop approaches to control the risk that dead stock and non-ambulatory animals could pose to the spread of bovine spongiform encephalopathy, should it occur in the United States.

The issues open for comment on the ANPR include:

- What is the preferred approach and associated costs to affected parties for controlling risks associated with disposal of non-ambulatory and dead livestock?
- Are there any cross-cutting issues between safe disposal of specified risk materials such as brain and spinal cord and safe disposal options for downer and on-farm dead animals?
- Are there practical ways to cull higher risk downer cattle, such as cattle that may have a non-obvious neurological condition, before they are sent to slaughter?
- How should risk factors such as age, physical condition, and the source and type of cattle be considered when sending downer cattle to slaughter?
- What would such culling cost affected parties?
- Can rendering be an effective means for safely disposing of dead stock in a manner that minimizes risks of spreading BSE and other animal diseases? Under what conditions?
- What are the associated technical, economic, regional, environmental, and practical business issues?
- Is there a need to particularly address disposal of sheep and goats with regard to scrapie and disposal of captive elk and deer with regard to CWD?
- What dead stock disposal issues are common to all species, and what issues are of particular importance to different types of producers?

The proposed rule can be accessed on the Internet at www.aphis.usda.gov/ppd/rad/webrepor.html.

APHIS is considering all comments received by March 24. By mail, send an original and three copies of comments to: Regulatory Analysis and Development; PPD, APHIS; 4700 River Road, Unit # 118, 3C71; Riverdale, MD, 20737-1231. Or e-mail comments, with reference to Docket No. 01-068-1, to regulations@aphis.usda.gov.

NIAA members in the news

Chaddock takes reigns of AVMA Washington office



Dr. Michael Chaddock has accepted the post of director of the AVMA Governmental Relations Division in Washington, D.C. He replaces Dr. Niall B.

Finnegan, who retired as director last June.

The former Michigan state veterinarian and 2001-2202 AVMF/AVMA Congressional Science Fellow brings an interest in public policy and years of experience working in legislative arenas. "My diverse background is the strength that I bring to the job," Chaddock said.

A 1973 graduate of Michigan State University, Chaddock has had several careers within the veterinary profession, including private practice as an employee and owner. He has been a technical service veterinarian working for an international company representing areas of nutrition, health, economics, and livestock management, with an emphasis on problem solving and disease prevention.

Most recently, Chaddock was a senior fellow at Johns Hopkins Center for Civilian Biodefense Strategies. There, he was a liaison between the center and state public health departments, collecting and analyzing data regarding preparedness activities for bioterrorism planning. Chaddock was also responsible for reviewing agroterrorism preparedness, prevention, and response plans for the country's food supply.

As an AVMF/AVMA Congressional Science Fellow, Chaddock served on the staff of Louisiana Sen. Mary Landrieu. He worked on several issues for the senator, including biologic and chemical terrorism, agroterrorism, animal care and welfare, and animal agriculture. Senator

Landrieu chose Chaddock to head efforts to develop a Center of Excellence in Biological and Chemical Warfare Medicine in Louisiana.

In addition to continuing to monitor animal welfare issues, Chaddock said the AVMA's legislative priorities in the 108th Congress are reintroduction of the Minor Use and Minor Species Animal Health Act, Small Business Health Fairness Act, and Veterinary Health Enhancement Act. Those bills would respectively, increase the availability of drugs to minor species, offer health insurance to association members and their employees in all the states, and provide for scholarships or debt assistance to veterinarians willing to work after graduation in rural or inner-city areas where veterinary services are scarce.

Olson joins FASS



Dr. Kenneth Olson has joined the Federation of Animal Science Societies as the Director of Education and Information Resources. In this newly devel-

oped position, Olson will oversee the development and utilization of a central source of industry information, which can be used in the development of products, programs, services, and events to meet member and industry needs. He will also assist in the development of marketing plans for FASS programs, event, products and services.

Olson brings a great deal of knowledge and experience with him to this new position. Recently he has been the Principle in KEO Consulting, which specializes in dairy policy, animal health and animal care. Prior to this, he served as Dairy and Animal Health Specialist in the Public Policy Division of the American Farm Bureau Federation. Preceding his time at AFBF, Olson served as dairy specialist

and Extension Professor at the University of Kentucky.

Olson is Chairman of the Board of Directors of the National Institute for Animal Agriculture (NIAA).

GlobalVetLink paves way for electronic health certificates

USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Veterinary Services (APHIS-VS) recently announced that it has established an agreement with Communications Resource, Inc. to implement **GlobalVetLink** web-based technology for private practitioners to create certificates of veterinary inspection (health certificates) for movement of animals between states.

The application has already been used in Florida and can be easily modified for use by the other 49 states. The electronic health certificates will be web-based and incorporate the requirements endorsed by the United States Animal Health Association five years ago.

The system will allow veterinarians to create certificates for printing, allow all states to access domestic import/export information, and produce a standard data dump that each state could use to populate their own local data systems.

APHIS-VS is targeting implementation to begin during the first quarter of 2003 for food animal species.

"Real-time data entry and retrieval of information for animal movement is of increasing importance," said Kevin Maher, GlobalVetLink president. "Our dream of a national, centralized web-based system is actualized with this important APHIS-VS relationship."

GlobalVetLink, L.C., Ames, Iowa, specializes in innovative Internet applications for state and federal animal health officials, private practicing veterinarians, diagnostic laboratories, and animal industry.

NIAA welcomes the following as new members!!

National Associations & Commercial Organizations:

Farnam Companies, Inc.
Contact: Mr. Stu Marsh
 301 West Osborn Road
 Phoenix, AZ 85013

Federation of Animal Science Societies
Contact: Dr. Kenneth E. Olson
 425 Spring South
 Schaumburg, IL 60193

National Association of State Departments of Agriculture
Contact: Mr. Richard Kirchhoff
 1156 15th Street NW, Ste. 1020
 Washington, D.C. 20005

State-level Associations & Publicly Supported Institutions/Agencies:

Colorado Department of Agriculture
Contact: Dr. Carl Heckendorf
 700 Kipling Street, S4000
 Lakewood, CO 80215-8000

Kentucky Beef Network
Contact: Mr. John P. Stevenson
 176 Pasadena Drive
 Lexington, KY 40503

Mississippi Board of Animal Health
Contact: Dr. Jim Watson
 P.O. Box 3889
 Jackson, MS 39207

Western Inst. for Food Safety & Security
Contact: Dr. Jerry R. Gillespie
 School of Veterinary Medicine
 University of California
 Davis, CA 95616

Affiliate Membership (Non-voting):

Equine Health for Life
Contact: Mr. Mike Emmerson
 9814 Zimmer Drive
 Algonquin, IL 60102

National Meat Association
Contact: Ms. Rosemary Mucklow
 1970 Broadway, Suite 825
 Oakland, CA 94612-2220

Not Rocket Science
Contact: Mr. Darron Goodgion
 E Service Road, Suite 100
 1001 Hwy 190
 Covington, LA 70433

Texas A&M Animal Science Department
Contact: Dr. Bryan Johnson
 Kleberg Center Room 432
 2471 Texas A&M University
 College Station, TX 77843-2471

UC Davis Department of Population Health & Reproduction
Contact: Dr. Joan Dean Rowe
 School of Veterinary Medicine
 University of California
 Davis, CA 95616

For information about membership in NIAA, contact Michelle Thomas at (270) 782-9798, Ext. 105 or mthomas@animalagriculture.org.

Renewing members!!

(during the past quarter)

National Associations & Commercial Organizations:

ALPHARMA
 American Association of Avian Pathologists
 American Association of Bovine Practitioners
 American Association of Equine Practitioners
 American Association of Swine Veterinarians
 American Farm Bureau Federation
 American Horse Council
 American Veterinary Medical Association
 eMerge Interactive
 Hawkeye Steel Products
 IDEXX Laboratories
 Iowa Select Farms
 National Band and Tag Company
 National Renderers Association
 PIC USA
 Schering-Plough Animal Health
 Viral Antigens, Inc.

State-level Associations & Publicly Supported Institutions/Agencies:

California Animal Health and Food Safety Laboratory
 California Department of Food and Agriculture
 California Farm Bureau Federation
 Idaho Department of Agriculture
 Illinois Beef Association
 Illinois Farm Bureau
 Indiana Farm Bureau
 Iowa Pork Producers Association
 Kansas Farm Bureau
 Kansas State University College of Veterinary Medicine

Kentucky Farm Bureau Federation
 Louisiana Farm Bureau Federation
 Michigan Farm Bureau Federation
 Michigan Pork Producers Association
 Michigan State University Diagnostic Center for Population and Animal Health
 Minnesota Pork Producers Association
 Mississippi State University College of Veterinary Medicine
 Montana Department of Livestock
 North Carolina State University Department of Animal Science
 Ohio Department of Agriculture
 Ohio Livestock Coalition
 Oklahoma Department of Agriculture, Food & Forestry
 Tennessee Department of Agriculture
 Washington Department of Agriculture
 West Virginia Department of Agriculture
 Wisconsin Department of Agriculture
 Wyoming Livestock Board

Individual Members (Self-employed):

Dr. Robert Kahrs
 Mr. Ken VanGilst

Affiliate Membership (Non-voting):

BIOCOR Animal Health
 Clemson University, Department of Research Services
 Feedlot Health Management
 Dr. David McCrystle
 Dr. Mysore G. Nagaraj
 Optibrand Ltd., LLC
 Dr. Maurice Shelton

2002 brings record meat consumption

Meat is still the main entrée on U.S. consumers' tables, it appears.

"U.S. consumers ate more meat in 2002 than at any time in history," reports Kansas State University agricultural economist James Mintert. "Total per capita meat consumption of all red meat and poultry by U.S. consumers is expected to approach 219 pounds in retail weight during 2002, which is a new record."

The figure is in sharp contrast with 1960, when total meat consumption averaged 166 pounds per person and 1980 when per capita consumption reached 195 pounds. In 1990, consumption hit 199 pounds.

"So, during 2002, Americans consumed about 32 percent more meat than in 1960, 12 percent more than in 1980, and 10 percent more than in 1990," said Mintert.

The larger consumption was far from evenly distributed among all livestock industry sectors, however.

"Virtually all of the growth in meat consumption over the last four decades has been in poultry," Mintert said.

Chicken (broiler) consumption on a retail-weight basis shot up to about 80 pounds in 2002, a 240-percent increase since 1960 when consumption was 23.5 pounds per capita. In contrast, U.S. beef consumption changed little over the same period, rising just 6 percent, and pork consumption fell 14 percent.

The increase in meat consumption in 2002 was not good news for U.S. livestock producers. Record consumption occurred because domestic meat supplies were record large. And the surprisingly large increase in meat supplies helped drive livestock prices lower in 2002, resulting in big financial losses for cattle feeders and hog producers, the economist said.

Tighter supplies of U.S. livestock in 2003 should support livestock and

poultry prices.

"U.S. beef supplies (net of imports and exports) in 2003 are expected to decline about 2 percent compared to 2002, which should drop domestic beef consumption back to about the same level as 2001," said Mintert.

Pork supplies are also expected to dip below 2002 levels – possibly as much as 2 percent, he added.

"Finally, U.S. consumers are not expected to see as much chicken in the meat case as they did in 2002, as chicken producers start to reduce production," Mintert said. "Moreover, chicken exports could also improve, although they are not likely to rebound back to levels seen before Russia initially banned U.S. chicken imports."

"The bottom line is that domestic chicken consumption could actually fall about 1 percent below 2002's, which would mark just the third time in the last two decades that U.S. chicken fell below the prior year."

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