

ID/INFO EXPO 2004 Offers Industry Insight into National Animal Identification System

The National Institute for Animal Agriculture's ID/INFO EXPO provided a further look at a national animal identification system, as outlined by USDA, for the beef and dairy industries, in addition to other key species. Approximately 500 stakeholders attended the meeting held in Chicago in mid-May.

Attendees gained a glimpse of the latest recommendations put forth by the cattle industry working group.

The cattle industry has become involved recently in the development of an animal identification system in order to ensure one that will work for both beef and dairy producers. The cattle industry working group has addressed a variety of issues, from funding to technology standards. A recent report of the groups work, including recommendations, was presented at ID/INFO EXPO 2004.

"It's important that all producers

participate," said Gary Wilson, an Angus breeder from New Concord, Ohio and co-chair of the cattle industry working group. "The program must be implemented cooperatively involving USDA, States/Tribes and the U.S. cattle industry."



The working group recommended that Congress give \$73 million in FY 2005 to help with implementation of a national system. The President's budget includes \$33 million for the NAIS in FY 2005. If supported by Congress, these funds would supplement the \$18.8 million USDA is putting toward the NAIS in FY 2004.

"We cannot afford to have any state left behind," said Wilson. "And we need validation testing to make sure the system works."

Technology has been a contentious issue for cattle producers, with a variety of options available. The working group is recommending the use of ISO compliant RFID (radio-frequency identification) ear tags, as outlined in the U.S. Animal Identification Plan.

"We're aware of other technologies, but we've got to start somewhere," said Wilson. "We are open to other technologies as they enter the market and become affordable." The working group even has laid out specific details, such as an official tag color of hot pink and official tag placement in the left ear.

Responsibility for applying tags has brought many questions for the cattle industry. Application of the

RFID tag will be the responsibility of the owner, according to the working group.

"If an animal loses a tag, there's no question that the current owner is responsible for getting that animal retagged," added Wilson.

The working group is seeking for all information to be Freedom of Information Act exempt and accessible only to approved authorities for disease traceback.

"Only essential data to enhance disease surveillance and monitoring shall be collected and stored in any state or federally managed database," said Wilson. "We're not looking for production data."

The group has recommended certain criteria for reporting of cattle movement. Reporting should take place when: cattle move interstate; a change of ownership in which cattle are moved to a different premises; or when cattle move to a distinctly different premises where co-mingling will occur regardless of a change in ownership (including exhibitions, rodeos, livestock markets, trucks or trailers). Required movements should also be reported within 24 hours, or at the end of the following business day, according to the working group. Optional reporting includes movement of cattle between pastures, even if not through commerce.

The cattle industry working group recommends assessment and initial implementation projects to help with finalization of standards for the national system, as well as projects to help validate the system in the future.

Wilson's presentation, along with other species' presentations, can be found on the Internet at www.animalagriculture.org/id. ●

Cattle
Health Report
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CATTLE HEALTH REPORT

A National Institute for Animal Agriculture Publication

Spring/Summer 2004

BSE Surveillance Taking Shape

Since the USDA's announcement for an Enhanced BSE Surveillance program on March 15, the cattle industry is keeping a close eye on how the program is unfolding. Controversy on reporting has stemmed from the announcements of inconclusive tests twice this summer. However, USDA plans to remain transparent



Dr. Ron DeHaven

throughout the BSE testing process, evident through the recent protocol change for BSE reporting.

The enhanced program, which began on June 1, aims to sample some 268,000 head over the next 12 to 18 months. This goal is based on statistical modeling, which shows this level of sampling would allow for the detection of BSE at a rate of

one positive in 10 million---assuming that all of the positives are in the targeted high-risk population---with a 99 percent confidence level. In other words, the enhanced program could detect BSE even if there were only five positive animals in the targeted population in the entire country.

USDA has approved 12 laboratories across the country to perform the rapid screening tests. Upon the finding of an inconclusive, tissue samples are sent to the National Veterinary Services Laboratory in Ames, Iowa for confirmation. There, the samples are tested using the world-recognized gold-standard test for BSE, the immunohistochemistry test. The results typically take four to seven days.

Though the two inconclusive tests, announced on June 25 and June 29, did come back negative, BSE remains a hot topic among the livestock industry.

Evaluation

In a draft audit report on BSE surveillance from the Office of Inspector General (OIG), no falsification was reported from USDA or FSIS regarding the downer cow. The OIG did express concerns about the sampling size in all animal categories related to the program, from non-ambulatory animals to dead animals on the farm. Dr. Ron DeHaven, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) administrator, noted that the program is getting a good amount of samples, targeting the high-risk group. Preliminary results from June indi-

cated that around 70 percent of the tests were from dead animals.

DeHaven pointed out that since the audit, which was based back in March, many activities have taken place. He stated, "...a lot of the recommendations that are made in the report are in fact being addressed or have already been addressed in the activities that have taken place since that timeframe."

BSE and Japan

Officials finished three rounds of talks with Japan in attempts to reopen those markets for U.S. beef. Japan has been a strong supporter for blanket BSE testing. Although no decision has been made, sources indicate that Japan is backing away from the blanket testing, which could help trade talks move forward.

Strengthening the Safeguard

Health and Human Services and USDA announced three actions being taken to further strengthen existing safeguards that protect consumers against the agent that causes BSE. They include:

- A joint USDA FSIS, APHIS and Food and Drug Administration (FDA) notice that asks for public comment on additional preventive actions that are being considered concerning BSE;
- An interim final FDA rule that prohibits the use of certain cattle-derived materials in human food (including dietary supplements) and cosmetics; and
- A proposed FDA rule on record-keeping requirements for the interim final rule relating to this ban. ●

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VSV in Texas, New Mexico, Colorado

Vesicular stomatitis (VSV) cases continue to climb in the Southwest, following the first VSV confirmation on May 18 from the National Veterinary Services Laboratory (NVSL) in Ames, Iowa in horses at one premises in the State of Texas. Since then, a total of 109 premises have reported VSV, including 16 cases in cattle, according to USDA, APHIS.

VSV is a viral disease that primarily affects horses, cattle, and swine. The virus that causes VSV

has a wide host range. VSV also occasionally affects sheep and goats. In affected livestock, VSV causes blister-like lesions to form in the mouth and on the dental pad, tongue, lips, nostrils, hooves and teats. These blisters swell and break, leaving raw tissue that is so painful that infected animals generally refuse to eat and drink and show signs of lameness.

The Texas Animal Health Commission reported the first case of VSV in cattle on June 30, after

NVSL confirmed that two cattle were in fact positive. Since then, 14 more cattle in Colorado have been confirmed to have VSV.

All of the infected premises have been quarantined, remaining under that status until 30 days post healing of lesions found on the infected animals. Only three premises has been cleared, with 25 in the post-healing waiting period. A total of 104 premises are currently quarantined in Texas, Colorado and New Mexico. ●



Cattle Health Report Spring/Summer 2004

Publisher

National Institute for
Animal Agriculture
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Cattle Health Report provides the latest information on issues pertinent to cattle health initiatives, strategies, research and regulatory action. It is a communications initiative of the NIAA Cattle Health Committee and is produced in cooperation with USDA-APHIS. Reprinting is encouraged.

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USDA Awards Johne's Funding

USDA will contribute \$8.8 million to two international research collaboratives, one seeking to control and eliminate Johne's disease in cattle, sheep and goats. The University of Minnesota has received the two largest grants ever to be awarded for animal disease research from USDA, Cooperative State Research, Education and Extension Service. A second grant will fund porcine reproductive and respiratory syndrome, or PRRS, research in swine.

Johne's disease (JD) is a bacterial infection in cattle and other ruminants (sheep, goats, and deer) that causes chronic gastrointestinal inflammation. Approximately 40 percent of all dairy farms in the United States are infected with the bacterium that causes JD, resulting in more than a billion dollars of economic loss every year. The impact is especially severe in larger dairy herds, and is estimated to cost up to \$200 per year for each cow in the herd.

The JD project is led by Vivek Kapur, BVSc, Ph.D., professor of

microbiology at the medical school and co-director of the university's biomedical genomics center, and includes several university faculty members from the Colleges of Veterinary Medicine, Agriculture, Food and Environmental Sciences and the Institute for Technology. A total of 72 researchers from 23 other universities, state and federal governmental agencies, and stakeholder groups will also participate.

The research goals are to understand how JD is transmitted; to develop new diagnostic tools to track the disease in herds; to study how JD progresses; and to develop a vaccine or methods of boosting herd immunity.

"We have brought together leading scientists in the field to form a comprehensive, multi-institutional, interdisciplinary collaboration that is committed to using cutting-edge tools to finding solutions to better diagnose, treat, prevent, and control JD," said Kapur. ●

BSE | *Landmark Symposium Held*

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Risk Communication

The probability of risk and the perception of risk are often very different, but both are real, relates David Ropeik, director of risk communication for the Harvard Center for Risk Analysis.

"The risk from fear is often worse than the actual hazard," Ropeik says. "The risk of humans getting variant Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease from BSE infected cattle is extremely low, but any of several risk perception factors can influence how a consumer will respond to news of a positive BSE case."

With BSE, new risk perception factors figure in, Ropeik adds. These include choice and awareness. A risk that someone imposes on you, like infectious material in your food, is worse than a risk you chose to take yourself, like eating raw fish.

"Relative to effective risk communication, what you do is more important than what you say," Ropeik says. "The rules imposed by the USDA in the 1990's to reduce the risk of BSE established public trust and confidence and helped keep fear of mad cow disease low far more than any press releases or news conferences they held after the BSE positive cow was found last December."

Consumer Response

Polls conducted by Gallup, Harvard University and the National Cattlemen's Beef Association show that more than 50 percent of consumers believe BSE in the United States is a minor problem, according to Dr. Christine Bruhn, director of the Center for Consumer Research at the University of California-Davis.

Other reports since the U.S. diagnosis show no change in demand for fast food or other restaurant food,

and an increase in interest for grass fed beef and organic beef, she reports.

"Several factors influence consumer confidence in the meat supply," Bruhn notes, "including consistent messages from state governments, universities and the USDA that meat tissue does not contain infectious agents, science-based messages from trusted authorities and readily available access to USDA and local food safety experts."

Consumers have two major concerns, Bruhn says, namely, why is meat recalled if BSE is not transmitted via muscle tissue and why are the names of markets that receive meat that is recalled kept confidential. "Consumers do approve of all the safeguards in place to protect the meat supply from BSE contamination," Bruhn adds.

Global outlook

"More countries will discover BSE, but there won't be any epidemics as big as the one in the United Kingdom," Hueston predicts. "There will be more cases in North America, but not many. More cases of variant Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease will occur, but there won't be a catastrophic epidemic. Control of BSE worldwide will be difficult, and international standards will change in response to new scientific findings"

The next big steps will be to enhance risk assessment tools and review alternative surveillance strategies that can be applied in countries with very different cattle production practices, Hueston points out.

"The bottom line is that BSE will be a North American issue for some years to come," Hueston says. "Re-establishment of trade will depend on trust and credibility built on surveillance results and compliance data. On a positive note, BSE creates the opportunity to strengthen animal health infrastructure for the benefit of our entire nation through expansion of the National

Animal Health Laboratory Network and implementation of a national animal identification system." ●

By Linda L. Leake

FDA's Commitment to the BSE Crisis

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) will step up its efforts to achieve 100 percent compliance with its BSE feed rules, according to Dr. Lester Crawford, FDA's Acting Commissioner in his keynote address to NIAA's BSE symposium.

FDA and its state counterparts conduct, at least annually, targeted BSE inspections of all renderers, protein blenders, feed mills and processing plants that could be tainted with BSE, Crawford points out.

"There are 1,949 of these firms, and their compliance with the feed rule has been estimated at better than 99%," Crawford says.

"The agency plans to improve on this record not only by inspecting more renderers and feed mills, but also by extending BSE inspections to truckers, firms that salvage pet food and feed, and to farms that mix ruminant feed," Crawford adds.

Other FDA plans, Crawford outlines, include increased sampling and analysis of marketed feed, including products imported from non-BSE countries, validation of a simpler and faster polymerase chain reaction-based method for the detection of bovine proteins in animal feed and evaluation of diagnostic kits for mammalian protein in feed.

These goals are attainable, Crawford says. "FDA's current budget is over \$21 million, more than five times what it was only three years ago," he reports, "and the agency is requesting an additional \$8.3 million for BSE activities in fiscal year 2005."

Dr. Crawford's full presentation is on the Internet at www.fda.gov/oc/speeches/2004/niaa0406.html.

News Briefs News Briefs News Briefs News Briefs News Briefs

Wisconsin Livestock Identification Consortium to Fund Projects

The Wisconsin Livestock Identification Consortium (WLIC) recently approved six pilot projects for Wisconsin producers and industry interested in advancing animal identification efforts.

The following projects, which are independent of the recently-announced USDA, APHIS ID projects, will help Wisconsin learn about the processes for animal identification and tracking for cattle.

- The veal pilot project, by the American Veal Association, is looking to demonstrate traceability of veal calves from their dairy herd of origin, through the veal grower and to the packing plant.
- The beef pilot project, by the Wisconsin Cattleman's Association, UW Extension and WI State Fair, will examine the opportunity of utilizing technology to implement an electronic health certificate, animal identification and animal movement to exhibition premises for beef cattle.
- The dairy pilot project, by ABS Global, Inc. and an unnamed producer group, will demonstrate the management benefits of implementing radio frequency identification technology and linking that id to daily reproductive and health management tools. Find out more about WLIC at www.wiid.org.

NDHIA, Holstein USA Announce Premises and Animal ID Agreement

The National Dairy Herd Improvement Association (NDHIA) and Holstein USA have announced a partnership, available

to NDHIA members, to begin initial implementation of premises and animal identification, utilizing Holstein's National Farm Animal Identification and Records (National FAIR) as the terminal database for their program.

"We feel strongly that active producer participation in the formation and governance of the animal identification system is essential," said Jay Mattison, CEO and administrator for NDHIA. "It is also important to have a program that promotes market access and commerce."

The agreement involves DHIA, including its 27,000 members, collecting premises and animal ID data through the DHIA field service system for entry into National FAIR. The program, in its current state, is separate from USDA's National Animal Identification System, however the two could mesh in the future.

TB Testing Lag Could Impact Reinstatement of Texas, TB-Free Status

Dairy and purebred beef cattle owners must complete the task that we agreed to accomplish by stepping forward to have herds tested for cattle tuberculosis (TB), if Texas is to regain Class "Free" status for TB eradication, says Dr. Bob Hillman, Texas state veterinarian. As of early May, 349 Texas dairies and 115 purebred beef herds have been tested for the bacterial disease since November 2003. While the dairy industry is making significant progress, it still falls far short of testing necessary to assure the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and other states that Texas has conducted adequate disease surveillance. Texas' TB plan calls for test-

ing the state's 850+ dairies and at least 2,500 of its beef seed stock herds by the end of August 2004. The plan was submitted to the USDA, along with a commitment to comply with the program.

"Clearly, cattle TB must be addressed in Texas and in other states where infected herds also have been detected. This currently includes California, New Mexico, Arizona, Kansas and Michigan. In Texas, we need the support of dairy and purebred beef producers to find infection, if additional infected herds are present; prevent further spread of disease; and regain our ability to move breeding cattle across state lines without a TB test," Dr. Hillman noted.

Supreme Court to Hear Checkoff Case

The U.S. Supreme Court released its decision to hear an appeal of an 8th Circuit Appellate Court ruling that found the federal Beef Promotion and Research Act in violation of the First Amendment. The decision to hear the case will allow the beef checkoff program to continue business as usual throughout the proceedings. The checkoff has helped grow consumer demand for beef more than 16 percent since 1998 and has increased the prices that producers receive for their cattle.

"This decision was expected," said Bob Rolston, Colorado cattleman and chairman of the Federation of State Beef Councils Division of the National Cattlemen's Beef Association.

The final Supreme Court ruling is expected in the first half of 2005. Thirty state attorneys general, along with Puerto Rico, asked the Supreme Court to hear the case and 48 industry organizations signed a brief supporting the review. ●

WLIC System Selected as Interim Model for Premises ID Registration

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service has selected a premises registration system, as an interim solution, that will record locations where animals reside or will reside. This is an important first step in the implementation of a national animal identification system (NAIS). The Wisconsin Livestock Identification Consortium developed the system.

"Before animals can be tracked during a disease outbreak, we need to know where the animals are located," said APHIS Administrator Dr. Ron DeHaven. "Registering animal premises is a key component of a national animal identification system and will help trace animal movements during any future outbreaks."

The interim system was selected based on the results of an independent review conducted by SI International of Reston, Va. Currently, USDA is enhancing the system for use in multiple states

and will provide it to a limited number of states in early August. It will be phased-in to ensure that any problems can be addressed before it is available nationally.

USDA will provide the interim standardized premises registration system that states or tribes can elect to use. States and tribes also can use other premises registration systems, as long as these systems meet national data standards. By early August, USDA will have evaluated other premises registration systems to ensure compliance with the national data standards.

USDA is committed to designing a comprehensive animal identification system that will trace all animals and premises potentially exposed to a foreign animal disease within 48 hours. This will ensure that the disease is quickly contained and eradicated. As announced in June, USDA will enter into cooperative agreements with states and tribes to implement a NAIS during the coming months. ●

USDA Awards \$11.64 Million for NAIS

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service has granted funding to state and tribal governments to support the initial implementation of the national animal identification system (NAIS). A total of \$11.64 million has been divided among 29 cooperative agreements for states and tribes. The money, allocated from the more than \$18 million set aside from USDA's Commodity Credit Corporation, is for implementing an identification system for all livestock and poultry animals on farms and ranches.

Dr. Ron DeHaven, APHIS administrator, says this funding will help the government move towards the goal of implementing the NAIS.

USDA aims to get the components of the national premises system in place first. With the agreements awarded, cooperating states and tribes now will begin to use the funds to register premises.

USDA Hosting Listening Sessions on Animal Identification

The U.S. Department of Agriculture is hosting a series of listening sessions across the country to discuss the development, structure and implementation of a national animal identification program for all livestock and poultry animals.

"These sessions will provide public forums to discuss the national animal identification program," said Under Secretary Bill Hawks. "A national animal identification program will help the government and industry more quickly

control outbreaks of a variety of animal diseases and reduce the economic impacts on the market."

USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service received more than \$18 million for 2004 to begin implementing a national system that will quickly and efficiently traceback diseased or potentially diseased animals. USDA has made steps towards premise identification (see above) to allow for pilot programs to test identification systems.

The listening sessions are a first step of an education and outreach

initiative, to which USDA will commit part of the \$18 million this year, as well as the \$33 million identified for 2005.

Remaining listening sessions are scheduled for: Ames, Iowa on Aug. 26; Joplin, Mo. on Aug. 27; Appleton, Wis. on Aug. 30; and St. Cloud, Minn. on Aug. 31. More details about each listening session, including the site and time of the meeting and transcripts are posted on the APHIS Web site at www.aphis.usda.gov/lpa/issues/nais/nais.html. ●

BSE in North America: NIAA Hosts Landmark Symposium

On Dec. 23, when Santa Claus was undoubtedly busy at the North Pole getting ready for his big trip on Christmas Eve, Agriculture Secretary Ann Veneman was busy announcing a "presumptive positive" case for BSE, courtesy of a Holstein dairy cow that arrived at a slaughter plant in Moses Lake, Wash. on Dec. 9, 2003. This seemingly ordinary bovine was destined to become famous as "the cow that stole Christmas."

Dr. Ron DeHaven, now the administrator of USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, and the APHIS Veterinary Services' field staff immediately embraced a proactive approach to dealing with the situation even before the World Reference Laboratory in the United Kingdom confirmed USDA's diagnosis of BSE on Dec. 25.

These developments quickly inspired a landmark symposium entitled "BSE in North America: A New Era," which was held on April 6 during the 2004 National Institute for Animal Agriculture Annual Meeting in Salt Lake City, Utah. The event drew nearly 300 animal health and industry professionals from the United States, Canada, New Zealand and Japan.

Imagine a "rewind" button before you to connect with the world class conference, first hand.

"Dealing with a national animal emergency is not how to spend Christmas," DeHaven recommends as he opens the symposium. "The USDA has never dealt with an issue that has garnered so much media attention as the cow that stole Christmas," he relates.

Ongoing surveillance will include testing at-risk animals, DeHaven reports, which includes cattle that are exhibiting signs of central nervous system disorder, non-ambulatory cattle, and those that die of unknown causes. "In the

U.S. that segment includes about 446,000 animals per year," DeHaven says. "We plan to test as many of these animals as possible over a twelve to eighteen-month period."

"We're making efforts to change international overreaction, particularly in the European Union and Japan, to our BSE case that has affected trade," DeHaven adds. "If we don't do this, the consequences of their trade policies will not be based on science."

Canadian perspective

Investigatory action was swift following the positive diagnosis of BSE in a beef cow in western Canada on May 20, 2003, according to Dr. George Luterbach, the Canadian Food Inspection



Dr. George Luterbach Agency's chief veterinarian of animal health and production for the Western Program Network.

"Eight herds of beef cattle in western Canada were destroyed, including the index herd and seven source herds," Luterbach reports. "Trace outs from the eight herds located on 35 additional farms were removed and destroyed. In total, 2,700 cattle were destroyed and sampled and 2,000 samples from adult cattle were tested for BSE."

The good news, Luterbach says, is that all samples tested negative. Responding to the U.S. BSE positive cow, Canadian officials investigated and traced 57 birth cohort cattle in the U.S. and Canada. Three birth cohort cattle in Canada were traced to two farms in Alberta and were destroyed, sampled and tested for BSE, as were nine common feed source exposed cattle from 1997 on an associated farm. All 12 tested negative.

"We'll never know for sure exactly when the Washington cow became infected," Luterbach points out, "but, like our positive beef cow, she most likely consumed contaminated feed."

Concurrent to the cattle investigation in May 2003, Luterbach and his staff conducted an investigation of the feed manufactured that may have contained the remains of the positive cow.

Compliance was very good, Luterbach reports, but there were a few cattle and sheep that were incidentally or accidentally exposed to

Key Points from Industry Leaders

"As we move forward from here, we need to take what we've learned about BSE and disease surveillance in general and put it to work in industry and government, so that when we have to deal with BSE or any other disease in the future, we'll be better equipped to handle it." *Allen Bright, Producer Member, National Cattlemen's Beef Association*

"Terrorists can use animals to cause disease to humans without hurting the animal. The entire food industry has worked hard since 9/11 to make food from farm to table a difficult and undesirable target for terrorist attacks, and, in the event of an attack, provide a means for a coordinated industry-wide response to limit the effects and enable the food system to recover as rapidly as possible. NIAA is a strong and indispensable partner in this ongoing project." *Tim Hammonds, President and CEO, Food Marketing Institute*

"My job is to protect the over 300 feed ingredients in the marketplace. Whenever I see FDA threatening one or more of these ingredients without a sound scientific basis, we take action. Steps taken against a handful of ingredients threaten the future of all other ingredients when the next crisis occurs." *Richard Sellers, V.P., Feed Control & Nutrition, American Feed Industry Association, Inc.*

"Renderers are very willing to become players in accelerated surveillance programs and we recognize the importance of them. However, we have logistical challenges to overcome, but we think it can be done." *Tom Cook, President, National Renderers Association*

prohibited feed. These animals were destroyed as a precaution.

"There are not enough inspectors in the world to be on every farm every day to monitor what cattle producers are feeding," Luterbach emphasizes.

International Review Team

"None of us feels BSE is widespread in North America," says Dr. Will Hueston, director of the Center for Animal Health and Food Safety at the University of Minnesota. Hueston shared a report on measures relating to BSE in the United States compiled by the International Review Subcommittee of Secretary Veneman's Advisory Committee on Foreign Animal and Poultry

Diseases (SACFAPD).

This subcommittee was charged with several tasks, most notably assessing the epidemiological investigation of the positive U.S. BSE case, and evaluating response actions taken.

"The epidemiological investigation of the U.S. BSE case conformed to international standards," Hueston relates. "The existing limited animal identification system hindered cattle traceback, but investigation of slaughter and processing did show that the positive cow's specified risk materials (SRM) were removed from the human food supply."

"We recommend disallowing stunning and processing practices which increase risks of contamination," Hueston reports, "along with banning mechanical deboning of skulls and vertebral columns of animals older than 30 months."

The ultimate goals should be to reduce public health risk, limit recycling and amplification of SRM, establish effective BSE controls through surveillance, prevent future inadvertent introduction and prevent the spread of the disease worldwide, the review team concluded.

"Our recommendations are based on science, international standards and global experience," Hueston emphasizes. "To achieve these objectives, it will take a shared commitment by national and state governments, producers, veterinarians, allied industry and consumers."

Agriculture Secretary's Advisory Committee

The SACFAPD reviewed the International Review report and recommended several measures to deal with BSE, according to Dr. Richard Breitmeyer, committee chairman.

"While there is agreement on many points, we are most concerned about the Subcommittee



Dr. Will Hueston

comments that appear to conflict with the risk assessment by Harvard University," Breitmeyer says. "A major discrepancy exists with the Subcommittee's conclusions that BSE may continue to circulate in the U.S. and North America. According to the Harvard risk assessment conducted from the late 1990's to 2001, the measures already taken by the U.S. government effectively prevent amplification and will lead to the disappearance of BSE over time. The Committee wants to get this issue resolved prior to completing recommendations to the Secretary."



Dr. Richard Breitmeyer

Economic Impact

A one hundred percent loss in U.S. beef and cattle exports penciled out to about a \$4.4 billion loss in export revenues, according to Ann Seitzinger, an agricultural economist with the USDA Centers for Epidemiology and Animal Health. "Gross revenues in the U.S. grain, feed, and livestock sectors are estimated to have dropped by between \$1.7 billion and \$9.2 billion," Seitzinger relates.

This is the range of estimates for the BSE situation (most notably export embargoes and limitations on imports) if it lasts for one year, Seitzinger explains. That is, if the current embargoes and limitations on U.S. imports stay in place from January 1, 2004 to January 1, 2005, this is the estimated range of impacts on the U.S. livestock, feed and grain sectors.

"Government investigation expenses through March 1, 2004 ran approximately \$4 million, while risk reduction measures totaled between \$182 million and \$224 million. That doesn't include the cost of increased surveillance testing."

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ers: BSE Roundtable Discussion

"I cannot emphasize enough the importance of utilizing practicing veterinarians in animal disease surveillance." *Dr. Mark Spire, President, American Association of Bovine Practitioners*

"Regarding the various new regulatory actions to address BSE, such as the ban on non-ambulatory cattle, limits on the use of advance meat recovery technology, and the expansion of the list of specified risk materials, the long term impact still remains to be seen." *Mark Dopp, Senior V.P., Regulatory Affairs and General Counsel, AMI*

"The ruling that non-ambulatory cattle can no longer be used for human consumption is difficult for the dairy industry to accept, as there is no provision for the exemption of acutely injured cattle. Also, the potential loss of the use of bovine blood and serum products will have severe consequences on the manufacture of colostrum replacement products which are critical for some Johnes control management practices, milk replacers and bypass protein supplements for adult cows." *Dr. Karen Jordan, Producer Member, Dairy Farmers of America*

"Livestock markets were instrumental in maintaining a steady cash market for cattle buyers and sellers during the BSE crises. As USDA responds to the BSE emergency, don't create a whole new set of issues and challenges that could be costly for all the stakeholders and seriously impair the free and open marketing of cattle in the United States." *Nancy Robinson, V.P. for Government & Industry Affairs, Livestock Marketing Association*