

News & Information for Animal Agriculture

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Collaboration Strong at Joint Strategy Forum on Animal Disease Traceability

The Joint Strategy Forum on Animal Disease Traceability co-hosted by United States Animal Health Association and the National Institute for Animal Agriculture in Denver, Colo., on Aug. 30-31, brought together 193 individuals representing 43 states, four tribes, 33 state animal health agencies, 38 industry organizations, eight universities and 34 producers and supply companies. Breakout participation during the Forum showed that 85 percent of Forum participants were interested in cattle traceability while the remaining 15 percent interested in traceability as it relates to swine, sheep and goats, equine, poultry and exotic species. Countries represented included the United States, Canada, Mexico and Japan.

The remarks and input of the attendees were then synthesized into a White Paper given to USDA and the agency's Traceability Regulation Working Group to provide input as it drafts a proposed rule on animal disease traceability projected to be published by April 2011.

Although USDA had conducted several public meetings regarding the agency's new framework for animal disease traceability in the United States that was announced in February of this year, the Denver strategy meeting was the only gathering directed by the industry and state/tribal animal health officials and worked from an agenda developed to elicit concerns, and questions and propose viable solutions. The Forum focused on the preliminary directions that the USDA's Traceability Regulation Working Group are suggesting in regards to official identification, exemptions, performance standards, compliance components, recordkeeping requirements and proposed timelines.

A preliminary prioritization exercise performed by Forum attendees revealed four areas of greatest interest and concern related to the new traceability framework: 1) recordkeeping requirements of official identification; 2) proposed official identification to be allowed for interstate movement; 3) traceability performance standards; and 4) compliance components. Specific interest in these four areas related to feeder cattle as well as enforcement of the program.

At the beginning of the Forum, Dr. Richard Breitmeyer, California's state veterinarian and the current president of USAHA, stated, "This Forum will allow for the open flow of ideas and concerns among those producing animals, State and Tribal officials responsible for protecting the health of animals in their areas and USDA. Unless we have a discussion including all parties, the development of a viable animal disease traceability framework will be much more difficult."

This "open flow of ideas and concerns" occurred, and the Joint Strategy Forum achieved its goal of creating an environment in which industry participants, state animal health officials, tribal animal health officials and representatives from the Veterinary Services area of USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service openly discussed the issues and potential solutions to help further develop robust animal disease traceability in the United States.

"At the conclusion of the Forum, industry and the States and Tribes had voiced their positions and progress was made," stated Dr. Michael Coe, co-chair of the conference.

The Forum's White Paper can be read in full at www.animaldiseasetraceability.com.

The official newsletter of the National Institute for Animal Agriculture. The National Institute for Animal Agriculture (NIAA) is a non-profit, membership-driven organization that unites and advances animal agriculture—the beef, dairy, equine, goat, poultry, sheep and swine industries. NIAA is dedicated to programs that work towards the eradication of diseases that pose risk to the health of animals, wildlife and humans; promote a safe and wholesome food supply for our nation and abroad; and promote best practices in environmental stewardship, animal health and well-being. NIAA members include farmers, ranchers, veterinarians, scientists, state and federal officials and business leaders.



www.animalagriculture.org

NIAA's 2011 Annual Conference, Committee Leaders

By 2050, it is estimated that nearly twice as much food will need to be produced to feed the world's growing population. With limited resources, it will be even more important that animal agriculture continues to produce food, milk and fiber in responsible and sustainable ways that meet consumers' expectations.

Adopting the theme "Consumers' Stake in Today's Food Production: Meeting Growing Production Demands with Integrity," NIAA's 2011 Annual Conference, April 11-14, in San Antonio, Texas, will explore the growing necessity of involving consumers as stakeholders in food production.

"As stakeholders, we need to provide consumers with accurate and complete information on the many issues surrounding meat, dairy and fiber production to help them understand the importance of evolving production practices," states Dr. Robert Fourdraine, NIAA president.

Dr. Fourdraine adds that areas that will be explored at NIAA's 2011 Annual

Conference include the elements of a stable food supply, food security, food safety, animal agriculture's importance in the ecosystem and effective ways to communicate to stakeholders.

NIAA is pleased to announce its 2010-11 Committee Leadership team.

Animal Care Committee: Dr. Jer Geiger, PIC North America, Chair, and Dr. Gail Golab, AVMA, Vice Chair.

Animal Health Emergency Management Committee: Dr. Matt Cochran, Texas Animal Health Commission, Chair.

Animal Health and International Trade/Animal Production Food Safety & Security Committee: Ms. Marcine Moldenhauer, Meat Link Management, LLC, Co-Chair; Dr. James McKean, Iowa State University, CVM, Co-Chair; Ms. Laurie Hueneke, National Pork Producers Council, Co-Vice Chair; and Mr. Andrew Kennedy FoodLogiq, Co-Vice Chair.

Animal Identification and Information Systems Committee: Mr. Victor Velez,

California Dept. of Food and Agriculture, Co-Chair, and Dr. Michael Coe, Global Animal Management, Co-Chair.

Cattle Committee: Dr. Karen Jordan, Dairy Farmers of America, Chair, and Mr. Nathan Jaeger, Alabama Farmers Federation, Vice Chair.

Emerging Disease Committee: Dr. Lanny Pace, Mississippi State University, Chair, and Dr. Hailu Kinde, California Animal Health and Food Safety Laboratory, Vice Chair.

Equine Committee: Ms. Barbara Linke, Texas Quarter Horse Association, Chair, and Dr. Robert Stout, Kentucky Dept. of Agriculture, Vice Chair.

Poultry Committee: Dr. Pat Wakenell, Purdue University, Chair.

Sheep & Goat Committee: Ms. Eileen Kuhlmann, University of Minnesota, CVM, Chair, and Ms. Linda Campbell, Khimaira Farm, Vice Chair.

Swine Committee: Dr. Harry Snelson, American Association of Swine Veterinarians, Chair, and Dr. Butch Baker, Iowa State University, Vice Chair.

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Forum's Resulting Points of Consensus

After three key presentations—"Update on Animal Disease Traceability Framework" by Dr. John Cliffored, Chief Veterinarian, USDA/APHIS; "Progress Report: Animal Disease Traceability Framework" by Dr. Keith Roehr, State Veterinarian, Colorado Dept. of Agriculture; and "State Veterinarians' Update" by Dr. Guy Hohenhaus, President, National Assembly—and reaction breakout sessions and a facilitated interactive session to discuss solutions, the Consensus Session identified specific areas of consensus among the diverse group of participants at the Joint Strategy Forum. Representing nearly every species and segment of the industry as well as various regulatory levels, the following 12 points of consensus were reached:

1. There is a significant need for more efficient and effective Animal Disease Traceability in the United States.
2. Feeder cattle identification should be required as soon as adequate benchmarks and baselines established indicate that identification of adult animals has been achieved.
3. Inexpensive metal "Brite" tags are acceptable as a form of official identification as a baseline, but the option to use electronic identification shall continue to be allowed.
4. Brands (hot iron or freeze) should be allowed as official identification provided the two states (origin and destination) have agreement regarding movement and that the brand information provides the original point of origin.
5. Animal Disease Traceability implementation should include separate considerations across species regarding official identification devices and methods.
6. Interstate Certificates of Veterinary Inspection (ICVIs) should be standardized across all states to improve uniformity of data collected. In addition, enforcement of ICVI requirements and the ability to update ICVI information both need to be enhanced so that minimum data collected and final destination information is accurate.
7. Backtags for cattle moving directly to slaughter should continue to be considered official identification until a better method to identify such cattle is developed. The framework was designed to build on existing systems that are workable. There was general agreement that the backtag system is a workable, efficient system that is widely utilized in commerce.
8. Official eartags with the "840" country code should continue to be used only for animal born in the United States.
9. Concise and accurate outreach and education for animal producers, handlers, marketers and processors regarding the new requirements under the Animal Disease Traceability framework must be a top priority.
10. Terminology regarding a state's progress in implementing Animal Disease Traceability should be defined to better convey the progress toward complete implementation, rather than its "status."
11. Identification of fed cattle moving directly to slaughter should be delayed until two years after all feeder cattle are required to be identified.
12. Successful Animal Disease Traceability must include strong and ongoing collaboration among producers, commercial interests and regulatory agencies at both the state and federal level.



Dr. Dee Ellis, Texas state veterinarian and executive director of the Texas Animal Health Commission, was among those who provided input at the Joint Strategy Forum on Animal Disease Traceability.

Members in the News & Other Items of Interest

Pork Industry Honors Four

The Pork Checkoff, along with its co-sponsor *National Hog Farmer* magazine, has selected four pork production operations to be honored as the 2010 Pork Industry Environmental Stewards. The award, now in its 16th year, recognizes producers who demonstrate a firm commitment to safeguarding the environment and their local communities.

This year's award recipients are Pembroke Oaks Farm, Wheatfield, Ind.; Ranch Creek Farm, Carroll, Iowa; Pleasant Hill Farm, Barnett, Mo.; and L&M Daughtry Farm, Clinton, N.C.

AABP Recognizes Dr. Mark Spire

Mark Spire, D.V.M., and technical services manager for Intervet/Schering-

Plough Animal Health, was awarded the American Association of Bovine Practitioners Pfizer Animal Health Distinguished Service Award. Dr. Spire of Manhattan, Kan., was recognized at the AABP annual conference in Albuquerque, N.M., and is a past NIAA board member.

Dr. Richard Breitmeyer Retires, Dr. Annette Whiteford New California State Veterinarian

After 26 years at the California Department of Food and Agriculture, Dr. Richard Breitmeyer retired Sept. 30 as California State Veterinarian. Dr. Breitmeyer joined CDFA in 1984 as a veterinary medical officer and served as state veterinarian since 1993, under three governors.

Replacing Dr. Breitmeyer as state veterinarian for California is Dr. Annette Whiteford who has been with CDFA since 2001 and has served as director of the division of Animal Health and Food Safety

Services since 2004. Dr. Whiteford will assume the duties of state veterinarian while retaining the director position. Dr. Whiteford also serves as vice chair of the NIAA board of directors.

Sheep Q&A Booklet About Johne's Disease Available

The National Johne's Education Initiative has partnered with the Wisconsin Dept. of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection and Wisconsin School of Veterinary Medicine to produce a new Q&A booklet specifically for sheep producers that addresses Johne's disease. To receive a complimentary copy of the booklet, contact NIAA at niaa@animalagriculture.org

NOTE: NIAA welcomes news from its members. Please email information to Teres Lambert, at tlambert@animalagriculture.org

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