

# Poultry

# HEALTH REPORT

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## National Poultry Improvement Plan Amended to Protect Against AI

The well established National Poultry Improvement Plan (NPIP) was amended on an interim basis when the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (USDA, APHIS) published in the Federal Register on September 26 new rules aimed at reducing the chances of low pathogenic avian influenza (H5/H7-LPAI) mutating into the more dangerous varieties such as high pathogenic avian influenza (H5/N1).

The NPIP, a cooperative federal, state and industry mechanism with a variety of programs intended to prevent and control certain diseases, has until now only addressed disease issues (including AI) in flocks of breeding poultry. The new program will include all commercial flocks. The specific categories covered are

table-egg layers, meat-type chickens, meat-type turkeys, waterfowl, exhibition poultry, and game bird breeding flocks.

At the heart of the new program is an indemnity program which will reimburse for costs associated with the eradication of H5/H7 LPAI.

"This is an important step because it expands the program well beyond the large commercial producers," said Dr. Mark Lobstein of the USA Poultry and Egg Export Council. "As of January 2006 the major poultry production associations in the US adopted practices where by all flocks of poultry were tested before being sent for processing. Although there is no evidence that AI is spread to humans by consuming properly prepared meat or eggs, that precautionary move was put in place in order to reassure the consuming public that the industry was doing everything it could to prevent the spread of AI in any form," he explained.

"The new provisions of NPIP are important because they expand the AI

prevention practices to commercial flocks of all sizes," Dr. Lobstein said.

At the United States Animal Health Association / American Association of Veterinary Laboratory Diagnosticians (USAHA/AAVLD) joint annual meeting in October, Dr. Lobstein detailed industry efforts to control AI. In addition to the precautionary test measures discussed above, he said that the industry had also increased its efforts in biosecurity and flock monitoring.

For more information or comments on the new aspects of the NPIP program see the Federal eRulemaking Portal at <http://www.regulations.gov>, and in the "Search for Open Regulations" box, select "Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service" from the agency drop-down menu, then click on "Submit." In the Docket ID column, select APHIS—2005—0109 to submit or view public comments and to view supporting and related materials.

The interim rule is expected to be made final at the NPIP meeting in January. ●

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## NOTE: USDA/DOI AI Notice Procedure

Because LPAI H5N1 detections in wild birds are common and pose no threat to human health, USDA and the Department of the Interior (DOI) are transitioning to a new method of notifying the public. In an effort to maintain transparency, USDA and DOI will post all future suspected LPAI H5N1 detections on the Internet. DOI will maintain a list of all such routine detections as part of the National Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza Early Detection Data System (HEDDS).

The low path H5N1 detection list can be accessed at <http://wildlifedisease.nhii.gov/ai/LPAITable.pdf>. A link also will be available on USDA's avian influenza Web page at <http://www.usda.gov/birdflu>. In the event of a presumptive H5N1 test result involving a large number of sick or dead birds or other circumstances that suggest the possibility of a highly pathogenic virus, USDA and DOI will issue a news release or conduct a technical briefing to notify the media and the public. ●

## Hot Topics

### Surveillance, Wildlife Diseases High on Agenda at Animal Health Meetings

The United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) and the American Association of Veterinary Laboratory Diagnosticians (AAVLD) recently held their annual joint meeting in Minneapolis (October 12-18). USAHA is mainly an organization for state and federal government animal health officials (both scientists and administrators) with representation from various trade associations and professional societies. AAVLD is just what the name implies - an organization comprised of diagnosticians. The joint USAHA/AAVLD meeting often serves as an important venue for discussion regarding emerging issues surrounding animal disease and as a forum to begin resolving various issues of concern.

Two prevailing topics dominated this year's meeting: 1) Disease "surveillance" based on predictive models measuring prevalence and subsequent threat of these diseases to the total domestic herd/flock and to humans; 2) Zoonotic diseases in wildlife that affect domestic animals and possibly even humans. AAVLD committee meetings often surround diagnostic issues and techniques; meanwhile, USAHA committees primarily deal with disease control policy.

Here are some of the highlights of the presentations and discussions:

#### Surveillance:

Surveillance has been an essential part of every effort to eradicate a given animal disease. But, surveillance in the 21st century is a far cry from not only your grandpa's surveillance of 50 years ago but also your dad's of just 15 years ago. And this is just the beginning. Surveillance techniques are likely to grow and expand even more in the next 20 years according to some of the speakers at the USAHA/AAVLD meeting.

This rapid change has been driven by two factors: the threat of foreign animal diseases and the expansion of information technology capabilities that make it possible to collect, transmit and analyze an amazing amount of data.

Recognizing the ever-increasing disease threats and opportunities to expand export markets, the USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service/Veterinary Service (APHIS, VS), working with the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture (NASDA), began a review of the U.S. animal disease surveillance system. In addition to the 9/11 events, the occurrence of bovine

spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) and the global risk of foreign animal and emerging diseases spurred those efforts into high gear, and as a result, the National Animal Health Surveillance System (NAHSS) was created in 2003. The NAHSS is a network of alliances and partnerships among government agencies and private entities designed to facilitate information exchange, enhance current surveillance programs, and establish and maintain the necessary infrastructure for surveillance.

"The NAHSS is a USDA, APHIS, VS initiative to integrate existing animal health monitoring programs and surveillance activities into a comprehensive and coordinated system, as well as to develop new surveillance methods and approaches," according to Dr. Brian McCluskey, USDA Centers for Epidemiology and Animal Health (CEAH), who spoke at the Scientific Session of the joint meeting. Dr. McCluskey leads the National Surveillance Unit (NSU), the coordinating entity for animal health surveillance activities.

The goal of the NAHSS, says McCluskey, is to systematically collect, collate, and analyze animal health data and promptly disseminate animal health information, especially to those partners obligated to respond: other federal agencies including the Department of Homeland Security, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (for humans) and others such as State Veterinarians and USDA scientists in the field.

Surveillance, McCluskey says, depends upon many interrelated activities including sampling at slaughter and marketing facilities and reports by veterinarians and other animal health professionals in the field. "That's where the readers



### Poultry Health Report Fall/Winter 2006

*Poultry Health Report* provides the latest information on issues pertinent to poultry health initiatives, strategies, research and regulatory action. It is a communications initiative of the NIAA Poultry Health Committee and is produced in cooperation with USDA-APHIS. Reprinting is encouraged.

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of the Health Reports come in. We need their first-hand knowledge of what's going on out there on the farms, ranches, and production facilities to make surveillance work. They've been great partners in the past and we hope that will continue," he says.

Dr. McCluskey noted a number of "successes" that have been achieved by the NAHSS including the incorporation of the National Animal Health Laboratory Network (NAHLN), which was created through the cooperation of the AAVLD, APHIS, and the Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service. This network combines federal laboratory capacity with the facilities, professional expertise, and support of state and university animal health laboratories, enhancing the detection and response for animal health emergencies, including foreign animal diseases.

In addition, guidelines and standards for the construction and operation of surveillance systems have been created, as well as surveillance plans for BSE, classical swine fever, and new targeted methods for pseudorabies and brucellosis. For more information go to the NSU website: <http://nsu.aphis.usda.gov/>. For more information on how NSU/NAHSS fits with the work at USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) and the broader scope Bio-surveillance at the Department of Homeland Security see other presentations made at the meeting at [www.usaha.org](http://www.usaha.org).

#### Wildlife:

The fact that wildlife and domestic livestock and fowl can and do spread diseases to each other has resulted in government and industry eradication programs for such diseases as tuberculosis (TB) in cattle and pseudorabies in swine. Some of these diseases, such as TB, posed a

human threat as well and fueled the need for eradication programs. But with the emergence of BSE/Mad Cow disease some years ago, and now with the extensive news coverage of a possible avian influenza (AI) H5N1 pandemic, even the general public is keenly aware of the overall problem of diseases spreading not only from wildlife to domestic animals but also to other species including humans. While these two high profile diseases grab most of the attention, a number of other issues, such as TB being transmitted from deer and bison to domestic cattle in Michigan and Wyoming and pseudorabies in wild boars threatening to re-infect the nation's swine herd, must be dealt with by animal health officials and the industry.

Another example, with a reverse twist, is the following: some wildlife officials theorize that Bighorn sheep in the Rocky Mountains are being infected with various diseases by way of domestic sheep grazing on public land. Therefore, there is a movement to ban domestic sheep from federally-owned public grazing land which would make sheep production impossible in many western states.

Numerous presentations, papers, and committee agenda items focused on these and other diseases, but of course, avian flu got by far the most attention at the USAHA-AAVLD meeting. For example, Robert Cook, of the Wildlife Conservation Society, described his organization's Global Avian Influenza Network (GAIN) for surveillance of wild birds. The goal of GAIN is not to duplicate efforts of countries such as the U.S. but to work in less developed nations where the governments have neither the resources nor the expertise to monitor the spread of the disease.

In addition, two half-day sessions, one on various diagnostic tests for AI and the other covering more general information on its spread and control methods, were held.

More than a dozen scholarly presentations were given while committees spent hours discussing what needs to be done and making several resolutions regarding AI.

And, these are just today's high profile diseases. Literally hundreds of papers and studies on everything from foot and mouth disease in pronghorn and mule deer to canine distemper to diseases of skunks and squirrels were presented and made available to attendees.

In addition to the USAHA website listed before, much more information on assorted aspects of wildlife diseases is also available at [www.aavld.org](http://www.aavld.org). ●

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## USDA Conditionally Approves Foam to Kill Chickens if Avian Flu Strikes

(From Associated Press)

The USDA has conditionally approved the use of water-based foam to quickly kill chickens if there is an outbreak of bird flu in commercial poultry.

USDA says water-based foam can be an alternative to carbon dioxide, which has traditionally been used to quickly kill large quantities of birds. Gassing involves more workers and exposes them to potentially infected birds, and it can be difficult to maintain a high enough concentration of gas to kill birds, according to the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.

Foam can be used to kill floor-reared flocks - chickens and turkeys raised primarily for meat - to contain deadly bird flu, APHIS spokeswoman Karen Eggert said. Foam can also be used to depopulate poultry in situations where public health and safety is at risk, when state or federal officials deem it necessary. ●

## USDA Holds Firm to Voluntary NAIS, Other Policies

Secretary of Agriculture Mike Johanns has some clear ideas about how the National Animal Identification System (NAIS) should work. During his address at the ID INFO EXPO 2006 in August, Johanns shared these thoughts, outlining what he believes is the best approach for the program: 1) NAIS is a voluntary system driven by the States and the private sector; 2) NAIS is a State-Federal-Industry partnership that allows for competitive forces in the free market to keep costs down; and 3) The Federal government does not control animal identification or movement records.

These same messages were reiterated by other U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) officials throughout ID INFO EXPO and again at the U.S. Animal Health Association's annual meeting in Minneapolis in mid-October. They were also key points in USDA's launch of the NAIS Community Outreach Program two weeks later at a workshop in Kansas City for State/Federal Animal ID coordinators and industry representatives.

Johanns and staff emphasized that the goals of NAIS can be achieved with a voluntary system, but still acknowledged the challenges a voluntary program can bring. They stressed the importance of educating producers about the value of NAIS and motivating them to participate in the program. A key part of this effort, they said, is listening to producer concerns and taking action to address them. USDA's decision to house animal movement records in private and State databases was in keeping with this approach.

USDA officials pledged to continue collaborating on NAIS with the States, industry, and producers to create a versatile, quality system. Through the new outreach campaign, USDA is working together with its State and industry partners to seek feedback on the program and ensure that NAIS makes sense for everyone.

As part of these efforts, USDA has recently published a draft NAIS User Guide at <http://animalid.aphis.usda.gov/nais/naislibrary/userguide.shtml>. The Guide provides helpful information about what

NAIS is and how it can help protect producers' animals and their investment. The Guide is intended as a resource to help producers make informed decisions about participation in NAIS. USDA is also accepting comments on the Guide through January 22, 2007, to gain producers' insights on the program.

There are three components of NAIS: premises registration, animal identification, and animal tracing. The first priority of NAIS has been implementing premises registration – the foundation of the program. USDA and the States are close to their goal of registering 25 percent of premises in the United States (estimated to be at least 1.4 million) by January 31, 2007. The number of premises registered across the country stands today at more than 333,000, or 24 percent, and continues to rise each week.

The second component of NAIS, identifying animals individually or by group/lot with a unique identification number, is progressing. Animal identification is available now for several species. The States and industry continue working on this component so that it will eventually be an option for all species. In support of this work, USDA has approved two companies to manufacture animal identification number (AIN) devices, and a third has submitted devices for approval. USDA is also in the process of approving AIN managers who will be authorized to distribute devices. Another recent change is USDA's plan for the distribution records of AIN devices to be submitted to private- or State-operated AIN Device Distribution Databases, rather than to USDA's AIN Management System. Animal health officials will request access to the AIN device distribution records only when there is an animal disease issue that warrants their use. This change is slated for implementation in April 2007.

The final component of NAIS, animal tracing, is under development by the States and private sector. Once this component is complete, producers will be able to choose an animal tracking database (ATD)—operated and maintained by pri-

vate industry groups or States—and report certain animal movements. In the case of an animal health emergency, these databases will be accessible by animal health officials through a "communications system" called the Animal Trace Processing System (ATPS). ATDs are currently being approved on an interim basis and agreements signed relative to their operation.

Johanns and staff remained firm on their position that the Federal government should maintain only limited NAIS information, and that the AIN Device Distribution Databases and ATDs should be operated privately and/or by State governments to ensure the protection of information. As NAIS moves forward, USDA is demonstrating a strong commitment to producers by ensuring that the program continues to evolve to meet their needs.

The Species Working Groups (EG) reported on their current recommendations at ID INFO EXPO. They are similar to reports made to the National Animal Identification System Subcommittee of the Secretary's Advisory Committee on Foreign Animal and Poultry Disease. The following are major point reported by the Poultry Species Working Group for direction and implementation of NAIS:

### **Poultry:**

The Bird Industry Working Group (BIWG) organized itself into two subcommittees— Group/Lot, representing commercial flocks/operations and Non-commercial flocks. Commercial birds were described as table-egg layers, turkeys, broilers, primary breeders, game fowl, ducks, geese and ratites. Non-commercial birds are represented by the American Poultry Association, Society for the Preservation of Antiquities, and the American Bantam Association.

In addition, the BIWG listed the following issues pertaining to poultry ID: many subgroups classified as non-commercial poultry; different basic needs of many subgroups; individual ID of small poultry flocks versus flock ID for disease control and trace back; the cost of individual ID in small flocks compared with

## Scientists Around the World Work on AI

### Chinese Discover Virulent AI Gene

Scientists in China have identified a gene in the H5N1 bird flu virus which they say is responsible for its virulence in poultry, opening the way for new vaccines, according to recent reports from Reuters.

There are many different strains of H5N1, some of which kill more than half the people they infect, while others do little or no harm. "We can now understand how this virus becomes

lethal and the molecular basis for its pathogenicity," Bu Zhigao at the Harbin Veterinary Research Institute told the news service. The Chinese researchers zeroed in on the virulent gene after analyzing two closely related strains of the H5N1 obtained from infected geese in southern Guangdong province in 1996 — one highly pathogenic in chickens and the other harmless.

Differences between the two strains

were located in four genes, they found. The scientists designed four genetically modified viruses, each containing one of the four genes in question, and tested them on laboratory chickens.

Only chickens infected with the modified virus containing the highly pathogenic gene died. The other chickens had no signs of disease, the scientists wrote in the November issue of the *Journal of Virology*. ●

### Egg Quality Program Helps Control Salmonella Enteritidis

A report on the Pennsylvania Egg Quality Assurance Program presented at the meeting of the U.S. Animal Health Association (USAHA) in October indicated that this program has been highly successful in controlling *Salmonella enteritidis* (SE) in table-egg laying hens.

Since the program was initiated as a pilot 10 years ago, there has been a significant decline in the number of flocks positive for SE and hence in the number of SE-positive eggs produced in Pennsylvania. For instance, SE-positive flocks have declined from 38 percent in 1972 to 7 percent in 2005 and the percentage of SE-positive swabs declined from 23 percent to less than 1 percent over that same time frame.

A report from the National Poultry Improvement Plan (NPIP) on the U.S. situation with regard to *Salmonella pullorum* indicated that infection was detected in only one flock in 2006, compared with two in 2005.

The National Veterinary Services Laboratories (NVSL) of USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) on salmonella serotypes in the United States showed that a total of 268 serotypes were identified from isolates recovered from animals, the environment or feed in 41 states, and the District of Columbia. The ten most common serotypes accounted for 61 percent of the total isolates reported.

The report indicated that *Salmonella*

*typhimurium* was again the most frequently identified serotype from all sources. This past year, *Salmonella enteritidis* was identified more frequently than any year since 2000, with 45 percent of the isolates being of chicken origin. It was the most frequently identified serotype from clinical chicken cases and fifth most common serotype from chicken monitor samples. Nineteen different phage types were identified among the 271 *S. enteritidis* isolates that were phage typed, with the most frequently identified being type 8 (45 percent), type 13 (30 percent) and type 22 (5 percent).

A report from the National Antimicrobial Resistance Monitoring System (NARMS) indicated that the development of antimicrobial resistance in salmonella also appears to be serotype dependent and, for the most part, is affected by the clinical status of the animal species from which it is recovered. In general, resistance to more antimicrobials was seen in iso-

lates from diagnostic sources, with less resistance for the same serotype obtained from a healthy source — that is, at slaughter or on-farm.

*S. enteritidis* exhibited the least resistance among the serotypes shown and, in general, among all serotypes. Multiple antimicrobial resistance was observed more often for serotypes *S. typhimurium*, *S. typhimurium* var. 5-, *S. Heidelberg* and *S. Newport* with *S. Newport* exhibiting the most resistance. Resistance most often occurred to the drugs that have been in use the longest, such as sulfamethoxazole, tetracycline, and streptomycin.

Testing by USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) at slaughter and processing plants has shown declines in salmonella contamination of ground beef since 1998. However, as a result of a sustained increase of broiler carcasses testing positive for salmonella from 2002 to 2005, FSIS has launched an initiative to reduce salmonella in raw meat and poultry products. ●

### USDA Releases 2005 U.S. Animal Health Report

The USDA released in October the 2005 U.S. Animal Health Report, a national overview.

The report addresses the many components of the U.S. animal health infrastructure, animal population demographics, approaches to foreign animal

disease surveillance, and new initiatives.

The 2005 U.S. Animal Health Report is available on the APHIS website at [http://www.aphis.usda.gov/publications/animal\\_health/content/printable\\_version/2005\\_us\\_animal\\_health\\_report.pdf](http://www.aphis.usda.gov/publications/animal_health/content/printable_version/2005_us_animal_health_report.pdf).

## Concern Grows about VLT in U.S.

# Some New Vaccines for Vaccinal Laryngotracheitis Show Promise

### Background:

Vaccinal Laryngotracheitis (VLT) is an acute viral respiratory disease primarily of chickens. Economic losses attributable to VLT have been important in many poultry producing areas throughout the U.S. and the world. Despite efforts to control the disease through vaccination and biosecurity measures, outbreaks of VLT are still a threat to the poultry industry.

Control and prevention is through vaccination with recombinant fowl pox-vector ILT vaccine (FP-LT), chicken embryo-origin (CEO), or tissue culture-origin (TCO) vaccines. There are currently several CEO vaccines, one TCO vaccine, and one FP-LT vaccine commercially available.

Several CEO vaccines are labeled for administration by water and spray in addition to the preferred eye drop method. The TCO vaccine is labeled for eye drop administration only. The recombinant fowl pox-vector vaccine is administered only by wing web stab inoculation at about 8 weeks of age. It does not contain a live ILT virus and therefore cannot be shed or spread from vaccinated birds. Different states have varying regulations related to the use of CEO vaccine.

In many states, in the event that a company wants to vaccinate broilers, a request is made to the state veterinarian for the use of CEO vaccine in a restricted area for a limited time and the poultry complex follows strict biosecurity practices under the supervision of a veterinarian. In other states, the state veterinarian does not limit vaccination with CEO vaccine, while in other states no CEO vaccine usage or importation of poultry vaccinated with CEO vaccine is permitted.

### Recommendations:

The recommendation from the USAHA Committee on Transmissible Diseases of Poultry and Other Avian Species presented at the 2005 USAHA meeting focused on the role of CEO vaccine in the epidemiology of VLT. The

committee offered the following recommendation:

There is sufficient evidence through field epidemiology and molecular epidemiology that CEO vaccine is related to clinical cases of VLT. States that have limited the use or eliminated the use of CEO vaccine have reduced or eliminated VLT.

Therefore, it is recommended that CEO vaccine be used only under permit from each state's Department of Agriculture with the advice of an industry health advisory committee/task force. This does not eliminate the use of CEO vaccine, but regulates where it may be used.

In addition, it is recommended that the CEO vaccine be given only by eye drop administration in long-lived birds.

The exception to this recommendation would be in the face of an outbreak of VLT where CEO vaccine may be used on an emergency basis without the use of a permit and may be given by alternative methods of administration (water or spray).

### Current vaccination trials

Over the past year, additional laboratory and field evaluations of the FP-LT vaccine in broilers by the in ovo route of vaccination have been conducted. The FP-LT vaccine stopped the spread of VLT between flocks in some locations. However, it has been reported that in "hot areas" approximately 12% of in ovo vaccinated broiler flocks did break with VLT.

Within a flock, the FP-LT vaccine did not prevent clinical signs or mortality in high-challenged houses especially if additional factors such as poor air quality or other viral challenges were compounding factors. When clinical signs or mortality did occur, they were reduced and of shorter duration. Mortality was typically between 30 to 150 a day for 4-6 days. In the more severe cases, mortality peaked in 3-4 days at 300-500. The higher mortalities were noted in flocks that broke later in the grow-out. In contrast, non-vac-

nated or CEO vaccinated flocks that break with VLT may have daily mortalities between 300-1500 for several days.

Additional field evaluations are currently being conducted with a combination of LT vaccines. Some broilers have been vaccinated in ovo with the FP-LT vaccine and boosted with CEO vaccine at 14 days of age. Other broilers have been vaccinated with a combination of FP-LT vaccine in ovo plus TCO vaccine by spray at 25 days of age. The level of protection will be reported at a later date. Concerns have been raised about the expense of dual vaccination (FP-LT and CEO or TCO).

It is suggested that the FP-LT vaccine be used in a zone approach around a CEO vaccination zone. For example, the flocks in a zone surrounding the index case of VLT would be vaccinated with CEO. Flocks in a second zone around the CEO zone would be vaccinated with the FP-LT vaccine. As flocks inside the CEO zone are processed they should be replaced with FP-LT vaccinated birds. The goal of this approach is to stop the spread of ILT to farms outside the original vaccination zone. The success of this procedure will be measured over the next year.

Laboratory evaluation of in ovo vaccination of the FP-LT vaccine has been conducted. Varying dosage levels were evaluated (10x, 1x, 1/2x, 1/4x). Hatchability was not affected at the various doses, but body weights at 5 days post hatch were decreased at the 10x dosage level. The birds were challenged at 28 days post hatch, and the protection level was 71%, 59%, 20%, and 33% in the 10x, 1x, 1/2x and 1/4x dosage level respectively.

An experimental recombinant HVT-LT vaccine has also been evaluated by laboratory challenge in layer pullets vaccinated at one day of age subcutaneously. Preliminary studies have demonstrated 100% protection at 3, 7, 10 and 15 weeks post-vaccination, 80% and 70% protection at 20 weeks and 25 weeks post-vaccination respectively. ●

## News Briefs News Briefs News Briefs News Briefs News Briefs

### 'Medal of Distinction' Awarded to Dr. Campbell and Dr. McCapes

Dr. Clarence Campbell and Dr. Dick McCapes were the first recipients of the new U.S. Animal Health Association's "Medal of Distinction," the highest award presented to an Association member.

"These two individuals are highly deserving of this award," said Dr. Bret Marsh, USAHA president, as he presented the medals. Marsh said the new medal, which was established in May will be awarded annually to recognize one or more USAHA members who have demonstrated outstanding leadership, provided exemplary service, and have made significant contributions to the advancement of the Association.

Campbell retired as Florida State Veterinarian in 1991 after 38 years of service. McCapes retired from the faculty of the School of Veterinary Medicine, University of California at Davis, in 1994.

Both individuals served as president of USAHA — Campbell in 1966 and McCapes in 1999.

### Drs. Reed and McElwain Receive APHIS Animal Health Award

Dr. Willie Reed and Dr. Terry McElwain were presented with the APHIS Animal Health Award by Dr. Ron DeHaven, Administrator of USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), during the opening joint general session of the United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) and the American Association of Veterinary Laboratory Diagnosticians (AAVLD).

In presenting the awards, DeHaven noted that both recipients have served as president of AAVLD, Reed in 2003 and McElwain in 2004. "Both of these men are passionate about veterinary diagnostics," DeHaven said, "and each will take every opportunity to share their vision

with anyone who will listen."

Reed recently accepted the position of Dean of the College of Veterinary Medicine at Purdue University. Prior to that he was Director of the Animal Health Diagnostic Laboratory at Michigan State University as well as Chair of the Department of Pathobiology and Diagnostic Investigation there.

McElwain is Executive Director of the Washington Animal Disease Diagnostic Laboratory. He is a Diplomate of the American College of Veterinary Pathologists and holds an academic appointment as full Professor of Pathology in the Department of Veterinary Microbiology and Pathology at Washington State University.

"The dedication, pride and integrity that Dr. Reed and Dr. McElwain demonstrate every day reflect positively on the activities they direct and on their states, AAVLD, USAHA and animal agriculture in this country," DeHaven said.

### National Assembly Award Goes to Dr. Holland

Dr. Sam Holland, South Dakota State Veterinarian, was honored the National Assembly's Award by state regu-

latory officials during the opening joint general session of the U.S. Animal Health Association (USAHA) and the American Association of Veterinary Laboratory Diagnosticians (AAVLD) at their joint meeting in Minneapolis in October.

### Two New Biosecurity Publications Available

USDA/APHIS has an informative bilingual calendar designed to help bird owners protect their birds from diseases such as avian influenza and exotic Newcastle disease, and an all-inclusive bilingual "how-to guide" about the effects of bird flu and steps to prevent it.

The free calendar, entitled 2007 Backyard Biosecurity: Keeping Your Poultry Health, is an essential tool for bird owners to ensure the prevention of infectious poultry and bird diseases. It provides information on the warning signs for spotting illness and how to report sick birds, as well as six easy-to-follow steps for bird owners to practice biosecurity.

Both publications are free and available now. To obtain copies, log onto <http://www.aphis.usda.gov/us/birdbiosecurity> or call (301) 734-7799. ●

## Mark Your Calendars for April 2-5, 2007!

### SACRAMENTO TO HOST 2007 NIAA ANNUAL MEETING

*BioFuels Energy: Animal Agriculture at the Crossroads*—That's the theme of the 2007 National Institute for Animal Agriculture's annual meeting which will be held April 2-5 at the Hyatt Regency Sacramento.

"BioFuels are taking off," says Annual Meeting Chair Jim Fraley. "Is that generally good for animal agriculture, or frankly, will it drive up our feed costs? Can we pass those costs on to consumers? These are questions everyone in animal agriculture is asking him/herself, and we'll try to

answer them in Sacramento this spring," he says.

As usual the planning committee has scheduled an extra, one-day symposium on the 5th (Thursday) with a special "hot topic" emphasis. This one is expected to be based on the recent outbreak of E. coli. The program will feature local accounts and experts. "And, what better place to do it, but in the capital of the state where the problem originated. It should be both fascinating and informative," Fraley adds.

## Live Bird Marketing System Being Monitored for AI Strains

Since 1986, states have been monitoring live bird markets (LBMs) in the Northeastern United States for the presence of avian influenza (AI) viruses that may pose a threat to the commercial poultry industry, according to Dr. Fidelis Hegngri, USDA/APHIS/VS.

In October of 2004, USDA/APHIS published uniform program standards to prevent and control H5 and H7 LPAI subtypes in the live bird marketing system (LBMS). The standards cover (1) licensing, (2) AI testing, (3) recordkeeping, (4) sanitation, (5) biosecurity, (6) surveillance, (7) inspection, (8) trace backs, (9) premises registration, (10) trace outs when positives occur, and (11) response to positive facilities.

The standards, which apply to LBMS, auctions, and small sales, as well as to producers and distributors who supply the markets, are currently being implemented by the states.

All LBMS, producers, and distributors that supply the markets must be registered or licensed with the state and must

allow federal and state inspectors access to their facilities, birds, and records.

These facilities must also have written biosecurity protocols in place. USDA-APHIS coordinates and administers the program. USDA-APHIS provides personnel and resources to assist states with implementation and compliance with program requirements.

Surveillance in LBMS remains a high priority. As of fiscal year (FY) 2006, USDA-APHIS has initiated cooperative agreements with 31 states.

In February and September 2006, the LBM working group met to address prevention and control of LPAI H5 and H7 in the LBMS. Even though the Northeast remains a central area of concern, the program has expanded to a national scope with the addition of many new states in the Midwest and the West. In addition, the working group discussed the program's progress, shared ideas, and agreed on the implementation of the

program.

As a result of recent efforts by VS and the states, there has been a marked decline in the incidence of LPAI viruses in the LBMS, particularly in New Jersey and New York. For example, in New Jersey's retail LBMS, of the 189 sampling visits to 36 markets in FY 2006, only 2 markets were positive at least once, as compared to 23 markets positive in FY 2005. The incidence of LPAI in New Jersey's LBMS has decreased from 20 percent in FY 2005 to 1.6 percent in FY 2006.

In New York's LBMS, of the 884 sampling visits to 100 LBMS in which over 12,000 pooled samples were collected, only 18 markets were positive at least once during FY 2006, as compared to 40 markets positive in FY 2005. In New York's retail LBMS, the percent of samples positive over the total number of samples submitted has decreased from 6.3 percent in FY 2005 to 1.1 percent in FY 2006. ●

## USDA Holds Firm (continued from page 4)

small value of an individual poultry unit; the need for complete participation of poultry owners for the program to have value.

The live bird market with its many species, ages and general diversity is a special challenge.

The tentative recommendations of the BIWG are:

- Group/lot identification mainly for commercial poultry
- Premises ID numbers
- Date the group/lot was created (Group/lots would be breeding poultry that remains in one production system and are sold as such and poultry that is produced as meat and sold directly to slaughter. Also, day old poultry when staying intact as a group or on a farm where no commingling occurs.) All birds going into the live market would require individual ID.

The BIWG recognized the following "chain of responsibility":

- Seller will ensure all ID requirements are met on the poultry presented for sale
- Persons or organizations presenting poultry for exhibition or similar situations must present to the management of the exhibition, poultry that have been identified in accordance with NAIS standards for poultry.
- It will be the responsibility of the show, fair, auction, etc. to report to the national database.
- The incorporation of all NAIS components will be added as we determine the items necessary for proper individual identification of poultry.

Finally, the BIWG stressed that significant costs will be incurred by poultry producers for the implementation of this program. Financial support to producers as well as some supporting infrastructure will be necessary. ●

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