

Poultry HEALTH REPORT

A National Institute for Animal Agriculture Publication

Summer 2007

Who Eats 800 Pounds of Chicken Every Day?

When the FDA found that approximately 30 broiler poultry farms and eight breeder poultry farms in Indiana received feed contaminated with melamine, flock doors were closed so birds consuming the feed could not be processed. FDA testing commenced to answer the question "Is the meat from poultry consuming the tainted feed safe for human consumption?"

In the end, testing confirmed that meat from poultry fed rations supplemented with pet food scraps containing melamine and related compounds is safe for human consumption. Risk assessment concludes that a person weighing 132 pounds would have to eat more than 800 pounds per day of chicken or other food containing melamine and its compounds to approach a level of consumption that would cause a health concern.

FDA and USDA rate the likelihood of illness after eating chicken fed the contaminated product as "very low." Because there is no evidence of harm to humans associated with eating chicken that were

fed the contaminated product, no recall of poultry products processed from these animals was issued.

Melamine, a molecule used in manufacturing cooking utensils and not approved for use in human or animal food in the United States, entered the poultry food chain when leftover tainted pet food material from the molding process was provided to animal feed manufacturers.

"It's like cooking cupcakes—you get some of the dough on the pan, you scrape it off and throw it away. What they're saying is that somebody bought that material, and it got mixed in corn and soybean that gets manufactured in poultry feed," Richard Lobb, spokesperson for the National Chicken Council told CNN.

First Cats, Dogs

FDA first learned of a problem in mid-March with pet food manufactured by Menu Foods Inc. after the company reported illnesses and deaths in cats and dogs that had eaten some of its "cuts and

gravy" style products. The Canada-based manufacturer supplies cat and dog food to numerous pet food companies that sell it under various brand names. Menu Foods voluntarily recalled about 100 different brand name products made at its U.S. plants in Emporia, Kan., and Pennsauken, N.J., and its Canadian plant in Streetsville, Ontario.

Within 24 hours of learning about the pet food problem, FDA investigators were on-site at the Emporia plant to search for possible sources of contamination. FDA worked with the manufacturer to ensure that the contaminated products were removed from the market and to inform consumers of the danger of feeding their animals the suspect products

At the same time, FDA consumer complaint coordinators around the country began taking calls from pet owners and veterinarians who reported illnesses that may have been associated with the contaminated pet food. FDA received

See 800 Pounds of Chicken | page 3

Inside This Issue...

PAGE 2

Clifford Reports NAIS Progress to NIAA ID Committee

PAGE 3

NIAA Conventioneers Hear Four Unique Perspectives on Biofuels and Animal Agriculture at the 'Crossroads'

PAGE 4

Shortage of Food Animal Veterinarians: A Call to Action

PAGE 6

Responsible Use of Antibiotics in Food Animals

PAGE 7

W. Virginia Turkey Farm: H5N2

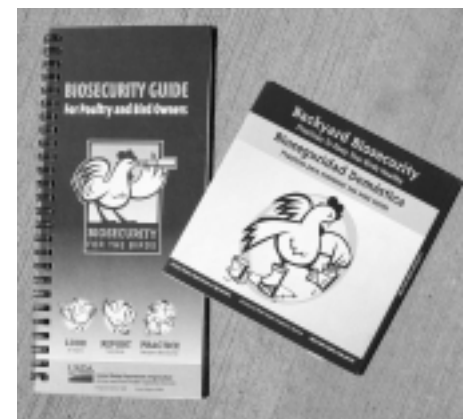
Reaching Out to Educate About AI

With avian influenza (AI) having the potential to be one of the most serious public health emergencies of the 21st Century, numerous national and state agencies and universities are focused on prevention and have developed educational resources for disease prevention and detection. Information regarding this educational effort was shared during the Poultry Health Committee Meeting of the National Institute for Animal Agriculture, April 4, in Sacramento, Calif.

This information was shared for one key reason: so individuals know what educational material is available.

"The pieces developed best serve the industry when they are being used," stated Dr. Andrea Miles, chair of the Poultry Health Committee. "I encourage individuals to know what is available and take advantage of the educational material."

Madelaine Fletcher, Public Affairs Specialist, USDA/APHIS Legislative and Public Affairs, sent a report that APHIS



reached past traditional news outlets with its advertising. In addition to advertising reaching nearly 30 million readers through cooperative magazines and hunter/wildlife magazines, radio announcements were run on select Spanish language radio stations. And,

See Reaching Out | page 5

Clifford Reports NAIS Progress to NIAA ID Committee

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) Veterinary Services Deputy Administrator Dr. John Clifford, said the implementation of the National Animal Identification System (NAIS) was making "excellent progress," citing the fact that nearly 380,000 (397,000 as of June 8, 2007) premises had been registered and 14 animal tracking databases (ATDs) and an animal identification numbering (AIN) system are in place.

Dr. Clifford opened the program for the Animal Identification and Information Systems Committee meeting at the NIAA annual meeting in Sacramento in early April.

Dr. Clifford reported that a grant had been awarded to the National Pork Board to register swine premises (see story on page 3) as part of a \$6 million fund established for non-profit organizations to conduct premises registration, outreach and education. He encouraged other organizations to apply for grants at www.grants.gov.

He also noted that a Tribal Premises Registration System is now available.

Official ID devices have been defined by USDA, according to Dr. Clifford, with "minimum performance standards and must have on it an AIN, the U.S. Shield and the words 'Unlawful to Remove' imprinted on each

device." In addition, radio frequency identification (RFID) devices are allowed.

Regarding RFID devices, he said, "The USDA retains its policy of being 'technology neutral' and relies on industry to recommend ID methods, performance requirements and technology standards."

Dr. Clifford said that APHIS was in the process of printing specifications for sow tags for swine producers and that the Equine Working Group had recommended RFID devices using ISO 11784/85 standards. Also, manufacturers' applications for RFID injection transponders for use in horses are now being accepted.

While Dr. Clifford emphasized that APHIS will participate in industry initiatives to facilitate standards for emerging, developing technologies, he also discussed one of the oldest technologies used for animal ID. "Brands have always been a part of animal ID in this country. They are often an asset to our disease eradication programs such as tuberculosis and brucellosis, and they will continue to be," Dr. Clifford declared. He said that an official Branding Group had been established and is working to develop how that system can be adopted for NAIS purposes.

Dr. Clifford also reported on the status of the private and State Animal Tracking Databases (ATDs) and USDA's Animal Trace Processing System (ATPS). Working with States and industry, USDA developed the ATPS which establishes the communication and messaging system with the ATDs for animal health officials to use in disease events when animal movement data is needed. In addition, States and industry collaborated on the development of the technical specifica-

tions for integration of ATDs with the ATPS. USDA released a document outlining those technical specifications on February 1. USDA is now establishing formal cooperative agreements with interested organizations whose systems meet the technical requirements.

He concluded by reiterating the fact that access to the data through the ATPS is restricted to the following situations:

- An indication (suspect, presumptive positive, etc.) or confirmed positive test of a foreign animal disease;
- An animal disease emergency as determined by the Secretary of Agriculture and/or State Departments of Agriculture; or
- A need to conduct a traceback/traceforward to determine the origin of infection for a program disease (brucellosis, tuberculosis, etc).

In the question and answer session which followed the formal presentation, Dr. Clifford once again emphasized the point that NAIS would remain voluntary on the federal level and that with the databases being in private or state hands, producers could be assured that their data would remain confidential. ●



Dr. John Clifford



Poultry Health Report

Summer 2007

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.

For a free subscription, send your name and mailing address to NIAA at:
1910 Lyda Avenue

Bowling Green, KY 42104-5809
ph: 270-782-9798 fax: 270-782-0188
e-mail: NIAA@animalagriculture.org
Web site: www.animalagriculture.org

H5N1 Human Vaccine Approved

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has approved a human vaccine against the avian influenza virus H5N1. Karen Riley, a spokesperson for the FDA, said the approved vaccine is intended for use in the event of a pandemic and will not be on the market since it is intended only for use in a pandemic.

The government has purchased 13 million doses of the vaccine—enough to vaccinate about 6.5 million individuals, according to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The federal authorization of the vaccine came after a clinical study to assess its safety involving over 400 healthy adults who received varied dosages of the drug. The trial found that 45 percent of the participants developed the level of antibodies expected to reduce infection from the

virus, according to a news release.

Request for licensing of the vaccine was submitted by the National Institutes of Health and Sanofi Pasteur, a pharmaceutical company with bases around the world. The poultry industry is contributing to this vaccine as growing the virus requires the use of chicken eggs.

Designed for patients between 18 and 64 years old, the vaccine would be administered over a series of two injections into muscle tissue given approximately one month apart.

Dr. Virginia Hinshaw, UC Davis provost and professor of virology, calls the FDA-approved vaccine a "stopgap" measure, noting that the vaccine is in limited supply and not highly efficacious. ●

NIAA Conventioneers Hear Four Unique Perspectives on Biofuels and Animal Agriculture at the 'Crossroads'

Ethanol and biodiesel, hot topics in rural coffee shops across the nation, were the focus of the Opening General Session of the National Institute for Animal Agriculture's annual meeting in Sacramento, April 2-5, as four speakers presented their unique perspectives on "Biofuels Energy: Animal Agriculture at the Crossroads."

A California farmer, livestock producer, former politician and cofounder of that state's largest ethanol producing company, Bill Jones, opened the session with "Corn, Cattle and Carbon Credits—A California Perspective" with a positive assessment on the relationship between biofuels and livestock production. Jones' company is Pacific Ethanol, Inc.

Meanwhile, Midwest economist with special emphasis on the swine industry, Dr. Steve Meyer, Paragon Economics, Inc., predicted that biofuels would negatively affect livestock producers over the next few years, "especially for pork and poultry producers who are less able to use the ethanol coproduct, DDGS (dried distillers grain with solubles)."

Dr. Gavin Meerdink, Professor Emeritus for the University of Illinois College of Veterinary Medicine and now a nutrition consultant, cattle feeder and

grain farmer, talked about the use of ethanol and biodiesel co-products and the effect of their nutritional composition on livestock health.

Finally, David Kaluzny, II, president of the National Renderers Association and vice president of Kaluzny Brothers, talked about his industry's perspective of biofuels in general and in particular as the role of rendered animal fats and oils (glycerin) used in biodiesel.

All of the speakers agreed that demand for ethanol, whether it's created by federal and state government policies, the high cost of oil or both, would keep the price of corn at its current price or higher for at least the next two years or until production can catch up with demand. Dr. Meyer observed that the high cost of corn is politically driven by federal and state energy policies rather than market forces. "So as long as the price of oil stays high and our energy policies remain in effect, the price of corn is likely to remain high," he said.

Further, Dr. Meyer predicted that ethanol might very likely be an "event" in agriculture equal to the introduction of soybeans as a U.S. crop or even the widespread adoption of the tractor.

As with many things, California has

its own unique situation that is atypical of the rest of the country when it comes to ethanol. Due to the heavy concentration of dairy cattle, the ever-present issues relating to water availability and use and state environmental air quality policies which created carbon credits, ethanol works well in all respects in California. "Yes, the cost of corn is high," concedes Jones, "but the value of wet distillers grain as dairy feed helps offset that expense. And, price signals sent to the American corn farmer will quickly encourage significant corn production."

In fact, Jones predicts that California farmers may become significant corn producers, "and not just for silage."

The use of the coproducts, distillers grains—wet and dried, was discussed by each presenter from their varying perspectives. All agree, to date, that inconsistency in the nutritional content of these products is a problem for livestock and poultry producers. However, with the demand for these products rising, ethanol producers will eventually find ways to make their coproducts more reliable and easier to use.

See *NIAA Conventioneers* | page 8

800 Pounds of Chicken (continued from page 1)

more than 14,000 such reports in the first four weeks—more than twice the number of complaints typically received in a year for all of the products the agency regulates.

FDA inspectors collected samples of the recalled pet food and sent them to FDA laboratories around the country for analysis. FDA scientists looked at a broad spectrum of ingredients. A New York State laboratory reported finding aminopterin, a form of rat poison, in some pet food samples. FDA's Forensic Chemistry Center could not confirm these findings. What the center did find, though, was melamine in the pet foods and in the wheat gluten used as an ingredient. Subsequently, FDA's field laboratories found melamine in more than 130 of the 210-plus samples of pet food and wheat gluten. In addition, Cornell University scientists found melamine in the urine and kidneys of cats that were part of a taste-testing study conducted for Menu Foods.

Weeks after the first confirmation of pet food contaminated with melamine, the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration issued a news release stating that "byproducts from pet food manufactured with contaminated wheat gluten imported from China have been used in chicken feed on some farms in the state of Indiana." This finding emerged during the agencies' continued investigation into imported rice protein concentrate and wheat gluten that were found to contain melamine and melamine-related compounds.

In the end, nearly 80,000 birds were held on farms in Indiana until testing proved the meat from the birds was safe. Prior to learning that the meat from birds consuming the tainted feed was safe, poultry farms were given the option of depopulating, with the USDA offering compensation for depopulation and disposal of poultry that were fed contaminat-

ed products.

An article in the Boston Globe reported that "federal regulators suspect that rogue suppliers in China deliberately laced a trio of protein supplements—wheat gluten, rice protein concentrate and corn gluten—with melamine to inflate the ingredients' protein levels and price tag." The article noted that "if it finds an intent, the FDA said its investigation could result in criminal charges."

It is not known why poultry that ate food tainted with melamine appear to remain healthy and merely excrete the chemical in their urine while cats and dogs consuming the same tainted food die from kidney failure.

Additional information is available at <http://www.fda.gov/oc/opacom/hot-topics/petfood.html> USDA and FDA continue to conduct a full, comprehensive examination to protect the nation's food supply and will provide updates as new information is confirmed. ●

Shortage of Food Animal Veterinarians: A Call to Action

A year ago the Spring/Summer 2006 Poultry Health Report featured the article "Projected Serious Food Supply Veterinarian Shortage Poses Threat to Industry, Society," that provided an overview of the Food Supply Veterinary Medicine Coalition Report conducted by Kansas State University's College of Business Administration on behalf of various veterinarian organizations. The article noted that, while America's livestock and meat industries have one of the world's best health and safety records, this status "may be threatened in the years ahead because of a projected severe shortage of food animal veterinarians."

Research findings were also published in three articles in the June 1, June 15 and July 1, 2006 issues of the Journal of American Veterinary Medical Association (JAVMA).

Mainstream media, including the Associated Press Wire, New York Times and the Brownfield Network, picked up the information and relayed it to the American public at the time. This spring, the story of the shortage of food animal veterinarians came alive again with a second round of mainstream media in the United States and outside the country.

A headline in the International Herald Tribune read, "Health experts in U.S. say shortage of farm animal veterinarians could lead to disease outbreaks." The first two sentences of the article expanded on the headline: "Public health experts are concerned that a shortage of farm animal veterinarians in the U.S. could lead to disease outbreaks, potentially endangering human health and threatening the nation's food supply. The American Veterinary Medical Association estimates the shortage at a relatively small 4 percent. But health officials say even the small gap increases the potential for diseases to go undetected."

In the same article, Dr. Lyle Vogel, director of the animal welfare division at the AVMA, was quoted, "It's not like the other 96 percent can pick up the slack. Because of the distances and workload of the remaining veterinarians, they just can't fill in that shortage."

Likewise, Robin Schoen, director of the Board on Agriculture and Natural Resources at the National Academy of Sciences, noted that, "We're kind of weakening the whole system. The veterinarian is the front line."

More to Tell

Why is the U.S. media returning to the food animal veterinarian shortage?

"The reason for the second round of media attention is that the problem has not been solved," Dr. Vogel states. "The shortage still exists, and we believe state and federal legislatures should take action to help solve this shortage."

Dr. Vogel says one desired action is for Congress to appropriate money for debt forgiveness or loan repayment for new veterinarians who set up practices or work in the under-served rural areas. He points out that the National Veterinary Medical Service Act was passed in January 2004 but the dollar amount available is extremely low: \$500,000 in 2006 and 2007.

"This is simply not adequate assistance to make that program meaningful," Dr. Vogel elaborates.

According to a 2006 survey, the mean starting salary for veterinary graduates was \$45,546. The mean loan debt for the same graduates was \$105,805. Loan payments on that amount of debt is more than \$1,000/month, requiring average veterinary graduates to spend up to one-third of their monthly salaries on educational debt. The National Veterinary Medical Service Act authorizes the Secretary of Agriculture to establish a loan repayment program for veterinarians who agree to serve in areas of need, including government service. Yes, agencies such as the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service and Food Safety and Inspection Service in the USDA also have experienced difficulty recruiting veterinarians to satisfy staffing needs.

In exchange for additional debt repayment, eligible students could enter into additional agreements with the Secretary to assist the USDA in addressing disease outbreaks, bioterrorist threats or similar emergency situations.

Another reason cited by Dr. Vogel for keeping the shortage of food animal veterinarians "alive" in the mainstream media is to get the public support of federal legislation regarding The Veterinary Public Health Workforce Expansion Act (VPHWEA).

The Association of American Veterinary Medical Colleges has been working very closely with the staffs of Senator Wayne Allard (R-CO) and Congresswoman Tammy Baldwin (D-WI) concerning the introduction of a veterinary workforce expansion. Their bill is

similar to the Veterinary Workforce Expansion Act of the last Congress, with a few improved changes that the AAVMC has requested.

This legislation establishes a competitive grant program through the United States Department of Health and Human Services to build capacity in veterinary medical education and expand the workforce of veterinarians.

"We urge people to get involved and call their Congressmen and state legislators," Dr. Vogel states. "Your calls can have an impact and help spur the government into action."

Smith-Kilborne Program

In response to the food animal veterinarian shortage, USDA APHIS reestablished the Smith-Kilborne Program. The program acquaints chosen veterinary students with various foreign animal diseases which potentially threaten our domestic animal population. Upon completion of the course, participating students are asked to share their new knowledge with others at their respective veterinary schools.

The week-long program admits one student from each of the nation's 28 veterinary schools, with the USDA paying for each student's program-related expenses.

Smith-Kilborne Program classroom sessions were conducted at Cornell University in Ithaca, N.Y., with presentations and laboratory sessions conducted at the Plum Island Animal Disease Center, Plum Island, N.Y.

"This program is one-of-a-kind and covers topics in greater detail and scope than the students would get in their university programs," states Jason Baldwin, DVM, staff veterinarian, Professional Development Staff of USDA APHIS VS.

"The Plum Island sessions are invaluable, as Plum Island is the only place in the country where these students will see diseases such as foot-and-mouth disease and Newcastle disease.

Acquainting the students with the symptoms of diseases such as this is important because, once the students enter practice, they will be our first line of defense."

New 18-Month Study

April 19 marked the first meeting of a National Academy of Sciences expert committee formed to study the broad scope of issues related to the veterinary workforce in the United States. The study,

Assessing the Current and Future Workforce Needs in Veterinary Medicine, will explore historical changes in the size and characteristics of the veterinary workforce, assess the demographics and adequacy of the current supply of veterinarians in different occupational categories and sectors of the economy and identify incentives, disincentives and other factors

that could affect the numbers of veterinarians seeking jobs in different sectors in the future.

The study will also examine trends affecting the kinds of jobs available to veterinarians and assess future demand for veterinary expertise in existing and new employment sectors. In addition, the study will look at current and future

capacity of universities and colleges to provide sufficient numbers of adequately trained veterinarians and identify training needs relative to the demand for specific expertise.

A report will present the findings of the 18-month study and identify options for meeting requirements for a veterinary workforce. ●

Reaching Out to Educate About AI (continued from page 1)

because everyone who owns chickens must feed them, a feed sack advertising the program was developed in coordination with the American Feed Industry Association.

"Tens of thousands of feed sacks with bilingual ads outlining the six biosecurity steps have been distributed through feed stores as well as Wal-Mart across the country," Fletcher stated.

USDA/APHIS produced several new educational materials, including a 32-page wire-bound bilingual "Biosecurity Guide for Poultry and Bird Owners" that has a "How to Protect Your Birds" fold-out; a 2007 backyard biosecurity planner/calendar that shares biosecurity tips concerning wild birds and which won an award from the National Association of Government Communicators; a bilingual "Protect Your Pet Bird from Bird Flu" pamphlet; and a small wire-bound flip book, "Guide to Birds Common to the Live-Bird Marketing System," for those in the live-bird marketing system. There's also a 17" wide by 22" deep four-color "How to Protect Your Birds" backyard biosecurity poster and a "Backyard Biosecurity Practices to Keep Your Birds Healthy" CD.

In addition to having material available in English and Spanish, some APHIS-generated material is being translated into Vietnamese, Tagalog and Chinese. These languages were chosen after polling the Communicators of the State Departments of Agriculture membership.

Fletcher explained that APHIS also has partnered with FFA, encouraging chapters to distribute biosecurity materials at state and county fairs and poultry shows. Interactive avian influenza educational materials produced with FFA went live last year at

<http://www.agedlearning.org>.

Additional outreach efforts taken by APHIS encompass stakeholder briefings, continued work with 4-H, an AI webinar on the Petsmart Charities web site and

numerous state activities.

CFSPH Work

Dr. Claire Andreasen discussed AI prevention and intervention strategy resources available through work performed by the Center for Food Security and Public Health (CFSPH), College of Veterinary Medicine at Iowa State University. This university-based center collaborates with numerous national and international government agencies as well as universities and departments to provide educational resources. A division of CFSPH is the Institute for International Cooperation in Animal Biologist (IICAB), Iowa State University.

The CFSPH web site, <http://www.cfsph.iastate.edu/Feature/aiInDepth.htm>, contains a feature on AI, covering basic information, technical fact sheets, key points, biosecurity, disinfection information and other items. In addition to information on identification and testing, the web site contains disease lesion images of AI and other diseases that are diagnostic differentials in poultry.

USDA Foreign Agricultural Service is funding a series of DVDs that highlight six five-day Avian Influenza-Newcastle Disease Virus Diagnostic Workshops conducted for more than 120 government officials from 60 countries. The lectures on the DVDs will cover clinical aspects, differential diagnosis, diagnostic tests, molecular diagnostics and virus characterization. The original workshops were in cooperation with the USDA/APHIS, National Veterinary Services Laboratory and USDA Agriculture Research Services' Southeast Poultry Research Laboratory.

Andreasen said that lectures, interviews and reference material on important issues related to world-wide vaccination decisions for control and eradication of AI are being assembled into a DVD format. The end product will provide facts and expert opinions regarding value, risk and impact for AI vaccine decisions. Sponsored by USDA with cooperation of the OIE, the project is being conducted

by the CFSPH/IICAB and will be available for target audiences of policy decision makers and field operations personnel.



CFSPH also created a web-based training module on AI and exotic Newcastle disease. The course, "Foreign Animal Disease Awareness," and a similar web-based course, "Program Diseases: The National Poultry Improvement Plan," are funded by USDA/APHIS and are required training for all new APHIS veterinarians and animal health technicians.

USDA also makes these courses available as free continuing education for veterinarians on the CFSPH web site: <http://www.cfsph.iastate.edu/CE/courses.htm>.

States Active Too

Numerous states have produced a significant amount of material for poultry producers and bird owners in their states. For example, the Avian Health Group, a cooperative effort of the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) and USDA, has published many items, including a 2007 calendar. Filled with beautiful photos of birds, the calendar delivers an educational message each month and information about how to tell if one's pet bird or poultry is sick. Another item popular among the younger crowd is a bilingual biosecurity coloring book.

The Avian Health Program targets pet stores, backyard bird owners, pet bird owners, swap meet participants and feed stores in addition to standard poultry producers. ●

Responsible Use of Antibiotics in Food Animals

Activists continue to apply increased pressure on antibiotic use in food-producing animals, and activists' messages are being more than heard. They are being seen. Billboards posted by Chipolte Grill state "Get antibiotics from your doctor, not your beef." Similar Chipolte Grill billboards have been aimed at the poultry industry.

Numerous food service companies have zeroed in on the public's concern with antibiotic use in food animals and have developed their own antibiotic guidelines. Wendy's, for example, has developed its own antibiotic use policies. Under "Managed Use," Wendy's policy states that "antibiotics used to treat food animals must only be administered by licensed veterinarians that have met all training and certification requirements." Its "Human Health" guideline reads "Reduce overall antibiotic usage in food animals, especially when the class of antibiotics used is both a human and food animal medicine. Employ alternative therapies, or use antibiotics not used to treat human disease whenever possible."

Negative and frequently inaccurate headlines, editorials and messages on the Internet feed the frenzy.

Concerned groups have been heard. On Feb. 8, 2007, Rep. Louise Slaughter (D-NY) sponsored H.R. 962, The Preservation of Antibiotics for Medical Treatment Act of 2007, which seeks to cut antibiotic resistance linked to the misuse of antibiotics in animal agriculture. Just four days later on Feb. 12, Sen. Edward Kennedy (D-MA) introduced the same bill in the Senate, S. 549.

Other bills with the same title were introduced in previous Congressional sessions: 109th Congress, H.R. 2562; 109th Congress, S. 742; and 108th Congress, S. 1460. These bills failed to make it through the legislative process.

The 2007 Bill would phase out the use as animal feed additives of antibiotics that are also important in human medicine, including penicillin, within two years. The bill also requires pharmaceutical companies manufacturing and marketing agricultural antibiotics to submit data on the quantity of drugs they sell, along with information on the claimed purpose and dosage for those drugs. The intention is to help public health officials track the implementation of the phase-out.

(Note: To track this bill, visit

www.govtrack.us, then click on "New Bills" under "Track Congress".)

Antibiotic-Resistant Bacteria Concern

The American Medical Association, the Infectious Diseases Society of America and the American Academy of Pediatrics are among the more than 350 health and other groups nationwide that have endorsed The Preservation of Antibiotics for Medical Treatment Act of 2007.

Public concerns about the potential for antibiotic-resistant bacteria to develop in animals and transfer to humans are not a new issue. Concerns can be traced to the late 1960s—just 20-some years after the first antibiotic, penicillin, was available to the general public.

The food animal industry has taken numerous steps to address the concerns.

"Numerous safeguards have been put into place to ensure that antibiotics are used properly in animals and to minimize the potential for antibiotic-resistant bacteria to transfer to humans," states Forrest L. Roberts, Marketing Manager, Beef Business Unit, Elanco Animal Health.

"Judicious use guidelines developed by the American Veterinary Medical Association with the assistance from several species-specific veterinary organizations have also been adopted for each individual animal species to ensure the right drug is used at the right time for the right bacteria."

The guidelines are supported by both the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Food and Drug Administration.

Government surveillance programs serve as early warning systems to monitor changes in antibiotic-resistance levels. Through the National Antimicrobial Resistance Monitoring System (NARMS), the U.S. Department of Agriculture monitors antibiotic resistance levels in animals, and the CCC monitors for changes in levels of antibiotic resistant food-borne human pathogens. Data shows levels of antibiotic resistance in animals have been low and stable, and levels in humans have generally declined since monitoring began in the late 1990s.

Judicious Use of Antimicrobials

The Center for Veterinary Medicine (CVM) emphasizes the judicious use of antimicrobials in food-producing animals and has developed products targeting veterinarians as a part of its Food Safety

Initiative (FSI) Education Program.

CVM guidelines and videos are available for veterinarians on beef and dairy cattle, poultry and swine as well as on aquatic animals at <http://www.fda.gov/cvm/JudUse.htm>.

Likewise CVM judicious use of antimicrobial guidelines and videos are available for beef, dairy, pork and poultry producers at <http://www.fda.gov/cvm/JudUse.htm>.

Various national species organizations also have developed judicious use of antimicrobial guidelines that underpin those created by the CVM.

The American Veterinary Medical Association's 15 general principles of judicious use that Roberts referred to gave impetus to the National Pork Board's shared program between pork producers, veterinarians, animal health companies and feed companies. Called Take Care™, the program educates the swine industry on responsible antibiotic use and assures consumers the right steps are being taken. Developed in cooperation with the American Association of Swine Veterinarians as well as other industry organizations, the program consists of five principles for responsible antibiotic use and six specific guidelines for implementation.

"Take Care" defines the standards for responsible use of antibiotics in pork production in a way that is producer friendly and takes into account existing science, animal welfare and animal health," said Dr. Liz Wagstrom, assistant vice president of science and technology for National Pork Board. "It intends to set the standards for antibiotic use in the pork industry before consumer groups or food service companies dictate them for us."

Responsible Food Animal Industry

The Coalition for Animal Health serves as the food animal industry's watchdog and spokesman, overseeing food animal health issues. The Coalition's mission is to support the use of sound science and risk assessment in decision-making by government regulatory agencies and to provide sound scientific information for use in policy changes and debate. This group also responds to public dialog on issues related to animal health.

In addition to monitoring trends in animal health product usage, the Coalition advocates prudent use of animal drugs in food animal production. ●

News Briefs News Briefs News Briefs News Briefs News Briefs News Briefs

Dr. Ron DeHaven Named Executive Vice President of AVMA

Dr. Ron DeHaven has been named executive vice president of the American Veterinary Medical Association, succeeding Dr. Bruce Little who retired. Dr. DeHaven steps into the position after having served as the USDA's top animal health official. He began his career with APHIS in 1979, then was named to lead APHIS in April 2004. Although Dr. DeHaven accepted the AVMA position in late March, he remained at APHIS for a few months to attend the 75th General Conference of the World Organization for Animal



Dr. Ron DeHaven

Health May 20-25 in his governmental role and to complete several projects.

Unwanted Poultry Virus May Help Treat Humans

While poultry producers take measures to keep Avian Newcastle Disease Virus (NDV) from invading their flocks, scientists are exploring a positive use for the virus. Virologists in the Virginia-Maryland Regional College of Veterinary Medicine at Virginia Tech are looking at how a genetically modified variant of NDV can treat human prostate cancer.

The U.S. Department of Defense awarded a prestigious \$113,250 research grant to Dr. Elankurmaran Subbian, virologist in the Virginia-Maryland Regional College of Veterinary Medicine at Virginia Tech, to continue work with his co-investigator, Dr. Siba K. Samal, for the exploration and hypothesis development for this innovative approach to

treating prostate cancer. The researchers' work is the first to alter Newcastle Disease Virus through a reverse genetic system to target prostate cancer specifically.

Smith Takes New Role at USDA/APHIS

Cindy Smith has been appointed the USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service's new associate administrator. In her new role, Smith will assist in managing one of USDA's most multifaceted agencies, charged with defending America's animal and plant resources from agricultural pests and diseases. In making the announcement, Dr. Ron DeHaven, administrator for USDA/APHIS, acknowledged Smith's 28-year career at APHIS and her commitment to "public service, vast knowledge of agency activities and dedication to protecting American agriculture." ●

W. Virginia Turkey Farm: H5N2

H5N2, not H5N1. That was the March 31 findings of the National Veterinary Services Laboratories regarding a virus that infected turkeys at a West Virginia farm. The virus, discovered during preslaughter surveillance conducted by a poultry industry group, was identified and confirmed via sequencing and pathogenicity tests.

The flock of about 25,000 birds located in Pendleton County in the east-central part of the state showed no sign of illness and none had died.

"We can say for certain that this is not the highly pathogenic H5N1 virus that has spread through birds in Asia, Europe and Africa," stated Dr. John Clifford, USDA Chief Veterinarian.

Because the affected poultry producer participates in the expanded national Poultry Improvement Plan (NPIP), the USDA provided 100 percent indemnity for all specified costs associated with depopulating this flock. Dr. John Clifford explained that the USDA published an interim rule on Sept. 26, 2006, expanding the voluntary cooperative federal, state and industry program to provide indemnity for eradication of H5 and H7

LPAI outbreaks and to provide support in the depopulation process.

USDA policy mandates that birds that have H5 or H7 influenza viruses be culled because they can mutate into highly pathogenic strains.

The turkey flock in West Virginia was depopulated using the foaming method. This method was used successfully in all four of the farm's houses: two with 10,000 birds, one with 3,000 and a fourth with 2,000 birds.

As an added precaution, all poultry operations within a six-mile radius of the affected turkey farm were monitored.

The last H5N2 avian flu outbreak in the United States occurred in February 2004 at a poultry farm in Gonzales County, Texas. A flock of 7,000 broiler chickens was culled as a result of that outbreak.

"USDA remains committed to transparency as we monitor for all strains of avian influenza," Dr. Clifford continued. "We will continue to work closely with state partners and the poultry industry in this effort."

The USDA and the Department of Interior worked with states to collect

more than 100,000 wild bird samples in 2006. During that time frame, the testing program detected low-pathogenic bird flu strains in six states.

Repercussions

Japan reacted to the finding of the low pathogenic virus being found in West Virginia turkeys and banned poultry and poultry products from the entire state of West Virginia. Japan also demanded that all poultry products exported from all other U.S. states to Japan contain additional statements saying that product was not transported or processed in West Virginia. In addition, Japan requested that product shipped to that country within the last 21 days of the West Virginia incident be re-routed to other export markets.

An agreement between the United States and Russia also resulted in restricting all poultry exports from West Virginia for 90 days. Plus, the United States restricted poultry exports from West Virginia to Cuba as a result of a previous agreement signed between the two governments. ●

NIAA Conventioneers (continued from page 3)

Dr. Meerdink warned that cattle producers in particular will need to be aware of health issues resulting from distillers grains. For example, they can cause calcium and phosphorus imbalance to the point where cattle develop kidney stones. High sulfur levels can cause several problems including polioen-caphaloamalacia (which is *not* the polio virus humans can contract, but rather a condition in which the cow's brain is damaged.) Another is copper deficiencies because sulfur & copper readily combine rendering the copper unavailable to the animal.

In addition to the difference in nutrient level between whole corn and DDGS products, "what's in the grain comes with the DDGS," Dr. Meerdink explained. This includes mycotoxins such as aflatoxin, ochratoxin and fumonisins, and antimicrobial agents such as virginiamycin.

Fumonisin is particularly dangerous in the equine diet.

"One-third—or 11.5 billion pounds— of all the fats and oils produced in the U.S. come from rendered livestock products. The other two-thirds come mainly from soybeans, but also from other grains such as corn and canola." Mr. Kaluzny pointed out. "We have a surplus of these feedstocks which are used to make biodiesel, from whichever source."

PowerPoint presentations from Drs. Meyer and Meerdink and Mr. Kaluzny are available at NIAA website, www.animalagriculture.org, under the NIAA News tab, click on the second "ZimmComm" Release. You can view their presentations and hear recorded interviews of each of the four speakers. You can also see their presentations on the 2007 Annual Meeting proceedings tab. ●

ID • INFO

EXPO 2007

August 28 - 30
Westin Crown Center
Kansas City, Missouri



For more information see
www.animalagriculture.org.

Non-Profit Organization
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Permit No. 82
Bowling Green, KY
42104

Poultry — Health Report
National Institute for Animal Agriculture
1910 Lyda Avenue
Bowling Green, KY 42104