

Animal Health News

Veterinary News from the North Dakota State Board of Animal Health

The Legislature and animal health

The North Dakota State Board of Animal Health (BOAH) tracked the following bills which passed in the 61st session of the North Dakota Legislature.

House Bill 1009, the North Dakota Department of Agriculture budget, included a new position, a livestock field investigator, who will for educating producers and others involved in production and recreational livestock activities on animal health issues, enforce importation requirements and assist with other duties.

House Bill 1017, the North Dakota Game and Fish Department budget, transferred \$200,000 (a slight decrease from past years) to the BOAH to regulate individuals holding permits to possess, propagate or domesticate protected species.

House Bill 1073 created a Uniform Emergency Volunteer Health Practitioner's Act, which limits civil liability for groups, such as the Veterinary Reserve Corps, that are activated in an emergency. The BOAH supported this bill.

House Bill 1110, an agency bill introduced by the BOAH, prohibited activities relating to the importation, release, and hunting of feral swine.

House Bill 1326 authorized the BOAH to provide inspection and verification services for a fee regarding standards and protocols for beef producers.

House Bill 1386 authorized the North Dakota State University Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory to perform rabies testing in cases in which human exposure is involved. Currently, this is only done by the state public health lab.

Senate Bill 2342 appropriated \$245,500 per biennium to fund the voluntary Johne's disease control program, formerly funded by a federal cooperative agreement.

Senate Concurrent Resolution 4019 urged Congress and USDA to examine the impacts of implementation of a national animal identification system on producers and to encourage voluntary participation only if the benefits significantly outweigh the concerns.

Senate Concurrent Resolution 4021 urged Congress to recognize the need for regulated horse processing facilities in the United States.

The BOAH tracked the following bills which failed in the 61st legislative session.

House Bill 1210 prohibits the Game and Fish Department and the State Board of Animal Health from using state or federal funds to regulate farmed deer and elk facilities. The board opposed this bill.

Senate Bill 2271 required the Department of Human Services to report any evidence of animal abuse noted during child abuse or neglect investigations.

Senate Bill 2395 requires that the North Dakota Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners conduct a study relating to the provision of after-hours emergency veterinary care in the state.

Senate Bill 2351, supported by BOAH, prohibited the intentional feeding of big game and the hunting of big game over bait.

Disease updates

Tuberculosis: North Dakota

Last October, the State Veterinarian's office was notified that a cow originating from southwest North Dakota was identified at slaughter as a tuberculosis suspect. The diagnosis was later confirmed, and a herd investigation was initiated. Necropsies were performed on 28 cattle that responded on the caudal fold test. No obvious gross lesions were noted, but samples were sent to the National Veterinary Services Laboratory (NVSL) for testing. After a sec-

ond herd test was performed in February, one animal was declared a suspect after caudal fold and comparative cervical testing. The animal was necropsied and tissues were sent to NVSL. Testing is now complete with all samples negative. The quarantine was lifted May 8, 2009.

Testing of three of the four neighboring herds is complete, with all tests negative. Testing of the fourth herd should be complete by early August. North Dakota's tuberculosis-free status remains in effect.

Tuberculosis: Other States

Minnesota: Minnesota's TB status was officially downgraded to Modified Accredited in April 2008. USDA has since granted Minnesota split state status with a 6,849-square mile area in the northwest classified as Modified Accredited and the remainder of the state upgraded to Modified Accredited Advanced. As of this writing, the North Dakota State Board of Animal Health does not recognize split state status and Board Order 2008-1 remains in effect.

Producers who plan to take cattle, bison, goats or camelids to Minnesota and return them to North Dakota should contact the BOAH office at (701) 328-2655 for details on re-entry requirements. North Dakota livestock exhibitors are encouraged to only attend Minnesota fairs and shows that require all Minnesota animals be TB tested prior to exhibition. Exhibiting livestock can be a high-risk activity for disease transmission. North Dakota animals which commingle with non-tested Minnesota animals may be quarantined for 60 days and tested prior to quarantine release. North Dakota animals offered for sale at Minnesota auction markets may be ineligible for re-entry due to the potential for comingling with untested Minnesota animals.

Indiana: Tuberculosis in three farmed cervid facilities in Indiana appear to be linked and are under investigation. There has been no change in Indiana's bovine TB status.

Nebraska: Tuberculosis has been identified in a farmed elk herd and a cattle herd in northwestern Nebraska. State and federal officials are testing more than 15,000 cattle that have fence-line contact or other epidemiologic links to the infected cattle herd.

Texas: Tuberculosis has been identified in a cow from a large dairy in Texas. Herd testing is underway. A negative tuberculosis test within 60 days prior to importation is required to import cattle from Texas to North Dakota.

New Mexico, Michigan, and California (as well as Minnesota) are not TB free, so additional importation requirements are in place for cattle from these states.

A state cannot apply for TB-free status until at least two years after the last infected herd has been depopulated. During that period, USDA/APHIS requires a certain amount of herd testing for surveillance.

Influenza

H1N1 influenza has been a hot topic in the news recently. Although the media has been using the term "swine flu," the state veterinarian's office avoids the term, since the virus is a compilation of various influenza strains seen in humans, birds, and swine.

BOAH continues to collect samples for avian influenza surveillance. Contact has been made with many domestic and non-traditional bird producers, backyard flock owners, and bird exhibitors. Thus far, nearly 3,000 samples have been submitted. No low or high path AI cases have been identified. Funds may be available to assist with diagnostic workups involving domestic or non-traditional birds. Contact BOAH at (701) 328-2655 for details.

General information about avian influenza with links to other AI websites can be found on the BOAH website at: www.agdepartment.com/Programs/Livestock/BOAH/AvianInfluenza.htm.

Brucellosis

USDA recently granted Montana "Class Free" brucellosis status. At this time, the North Dakota Board of Animal Health Order 2008-2 is still in effect, requiring a negative brucellosis test on most cattle over 12 months of age coming from Montana. Exemptions may be made in some cases.

BSE

Forty-three samples from North Dakota were submitted for BSE surveillance in FY 2008. All samples were negative.

Contagious Equine Metritis (CEM)

Contagious equine metritis was identified in a quarter horse stallion in Kentucky in December. An epidemiologic investigation has identified 20 additional positive stallions and five positive mares. More than 960 exposed horses located throughout the United States and Canada must be tested. North Dakota has identified one mare bred to an infected stallion via artificial insemination. This mare was tested according to the APHIS protocol and is negative for CEM.

CEM is a sexually transmitted disease of horses caused by the bacteria *Taylorella equigenitalis*. Clinical signs may include a mucopurulent vaginal discharge in up to 40 percent of affected mares, abortion and infertility. Stallions typically show no clinical signs. A chronic carrier state without outward signs does exist. There is an effective treatment available, but it is very time and labor intensive.

CWD

Since 1998, more than 6,200 farmed deer and elk have been tested for chronic wasting disease in North Dakota. No samples have tested positive for the disease. The North Dakota Game and Fish Department has tested more than 10,300 wild deer and elk with no positive results.

Anaplasmosis

by Dr. Jesse Vollmer

Several clinical cases of anaplasmosis have already been reported in Canada this year. North Dakota has had a few serologically positive animals but none with known clinical signs. Some of these cases are in rodeo practice stock that have only been in the state for a couple of years, so it possibly an old titer from when the animals lived farther south. In other instances, native bulls are found to be serologically positive when tested at stud. Accredited veterinarians are urged to continue monitoring the situation.

A reportable disease, anaplasmosis is caused by *Anaplasma marginale*, an organism transmitted by more than 20 species of ticks and by horse flies and stable flies. The organism attaches to the outside of RBC's and causes them to rupture or lyse. An anemia follows. The first case I saw, while in veterinary school at Kansas State, looked like the "hardware" cases I had seen interning in North Dakota. The afflicted animal had all of the heart sounds of "hardware" – jugular pulse, and ventral brisket and jaw edema – seen in the end stages of "hardware" disease. Most cases

that I have subsequently seen have been much more subtle, most only showing some degree of lethargy and jaundice. Should an animal present with these signs, veterinarians should consider collecting blood for anaplasmosis testing.

Vesicular stomatitis

As of this writing, vesicular stomatitis has been diagnosed on two equine premises in DeBaca, NM and two equine premises in Starr County, TX. One of the Starr County premises has already been released from quarantine. All livestock from states with a confirmed case of VS in the calendar year must obtain a pre-entry permit number and include the following statement on the certificate of veterinary inspection: "The animals on the CVI have not originated from a premise or an area under quarantine for Vesicular Stomatitis or a premises on which Vesicular Stomatitis has been diagnosed in the last 30 days; and the animals in the shipment have no signs of Vesicular Stomatitis."

For shipments within a 10-mile radius of an infected area or premises, use the statement above except for the exam must be within a 24-hour time frame as well as the Certificate of Veterinary Inspection issued within 24 hours.

Program updates

Animal identification

More than 8,730 of the estimated 14,000 premises in North Dakota now have a registered premises number in the National Animal Identification System. This has been made possible through a joint effort with the North Dakota Stockmen's Association (NDSA). In addition to producers, auction markets and veterinary clinics are encouraged to register. Retail locations that wish to sell NAIS-compliant tags must register. A state animal ID advisory committee has been formed to help answer questions and provide input. Contact Heather Schaan with the BOAH at (701) 328-2350 for more information or to register a premises. Owners of cattle, horses and mules may also contact the NDSA at (701) 223-2522.

Official identification

It is a violation of federal law to remove official identification from livestock. Any incident of persons removing USDA or Canadian ear tags (including bar code and RFID tags), should be reported to either Dr. Larry Schuler, the federal area veterinarian in charge, at (701) 250-4210 or Dr. Keller, the state veterinarian, at (701) 328-2655.

Emergency preparedness and response

The severe weather in March and April kept the State Board of Animal Health very busy. State veterinarians

(primarily Dr. Jesse Vollmer), assisted by Dr. Tim Rector, the USDA-APHIS-Veterinary Services area emergency coordinator, and Amy Jirsa-Smith, the area inspector for USDA-Animal Care, spent many long days in the State Emergency Operations Center (EOC), a secure facility at Fraire Barracks in Bismarck.

The state response plan called for the board to be responsible for animal sheltering. Local and state animal shelters were set up across the state in case of evacuations. Businesses and organizations that donated equipment, supplies, and personnel to help deal with flooding issues included: Petsmart Charities, Kirkwood Community College of Iowa, Noah's Wish, American Humane Association and the Minnesota Veterinary Reserve Corps. They were integral in helping us respond to the flooding, as were numerous veterinarians and clinics, including the Valley City Veterinary Clinic in Valley City, Valley Veterinary Clinic and West Fargo Animal Hospital in West Fargo, staff and students of NDSU, Northern Veterinary Service in Linton, and others.

There are areas of the state that are still not out of danger as the Devils Lake area is expected to experience flooding as the lake expands. Plans are being developed to prepare for potential flooding in this area.

Johne's Disease

Although voluntary, the Johne's program is a USDA-regulated program requiring official identification for participation. Official ID includes one of the following:

1. An alphanumeric official metal ID tag, either a silver clip or bangs tag.
2. A tattoo or freeze brand that can be tied to a registration paper. This should be noted on the test chart.
3. A radio frequency identification device (RFID).

Plastic bangle tags do not count.

Veterinarians are asked to read the print on the bottom left hand corner of the NDSU serology form that they or their technician signs when sending blood to NDSU.

Cows that test positive on the ELISA are still coming up negative on fecal PCR (polymerase chain reaction). An abundant population of soil-borne *Mycobacterium* may be triggering the ELISA tests. The ELISA test is good for finding herds that have infection. It does not appear to do as good of a job at picking up individual animals in low prevalence herds or those herds that keep the animals scattered throughout the year. It is recommended that animals which test positive on the ELISA are subsequently tested via fecal culture or PCR. NDSU is running a PCR both on individual animals and pooled samples (the lab does the pooling). Recent research indicates that a PCR test can detect *Mycobacterium avium* ss. Paratuberculosis (MAP) six months before the animal shows up positive on an ELISA test. An ELISA-positive animal that is clinical should still be considered to be infected and sold to slaughter or humanely euthanized as soon as is practical. The ELISA test is a screening test to find infected herds and is not considered an official test. The fecal tests (culture or PCR) are antigen detecting tests and are considered official tests.

The overall goal of the program is to reduce the incidence of MAP within a producer's herd, the environment, and the overall prevalence of herds that are infected. There was an effort last fall to redo the current classification system. States that had a program before the national program started strenuously objected and the proposal was tabled for another year. The proposed classification involved a system where large herds were not penalized as severely for having one positive animal on a whole herd test. The premise is that there is a greater likelihood of finding a positive animal in a herd of 30 that tested negative (therefore test negative side) then by buying an animal from a herd of 500 with one positive animal (therefore currently level B herd). The option of testing 30 head is good for one thing; it allows the producer to remain in the program. If the producer finds a positive animal of the 30, he is assigned a level D. This is the same thing that happens if he tests more than 30 head but it is still not a whole herd test. While it is hardest on the

producer's pocketbook, the best plan from a disease reduction standpoint is to do the whole herd test yearly. Veterinarians who submit samples for program testing should write "State Johne's Program" on the "reason for test" line. This will flag the results for the state office and ensure that samples are not overlooked as routine testing.

Because of steadily decreasing federal funding, cattle industry representatives worked with Sens. Ryan Taylor, Randy Christmann, Jerry Klein, and Reps. Mike Brandenburg, Rod Froelich, and Kenton Onstad to introduce Senate Bill 2342 in the North Dakota Legislature to address this issue. The bill passed, providing state funding to maintain the program at the current level of participation and allow some new participation as well. Education was seen as a very vital element to making the program work within the state and will be more highly emphasized in the future.

Questions regarding the Johne's disease program should be directed to Dr. Jesse Vollmer at (701) 328-2612.

Scrapie

USDA has a goal of eradicating scrapie by 2012. The most recent scrapie flock investigation in North Dakota was completed in August of 2007. In order to do our part to assist in the eradication effort, we are being asked to increase on-farm and market surveillance. Limited funds are available to compensate those submitting samples. Please contact the office if you have sheep which may qualify.

Limited cooperative agreement funds are also available for genotyping. Interested producers should contact Dr. Beth Carlson at (701) 328-2655 for more information and to obtain approval and the appropriate forms. In the past, several producers have not been paid or had their payments delayed because the veterinarian did not use the appropriate forms or did not fill the forms out correctly. Veterinarians must use a VS form 5-29 and sheep must be identified with a scrapie tag.

The current cooperative agreement ends Dec. 31, 2009.

Foreign Animal Disease

Limited funds are available to help work up cases when multiple animals in a herd are affected by an unknown disease. In the past, BOAH has assisted multiple producers. Producers should contact Dr. Beth Carlson at (701) 328-2655 if they have cases that may qualify.

Humane Complaints

The BOAH has investigated or assisted in the investigation of more than 50 complaints of inhumane treatment of animals, mostly cattle or horses, since Jan. 1. This is an increase in the number of complaints typically received; additionally, a greater number of the complaints this year were truly serious situations. Extreme weather conditions,

a poor 2008 hay crop and the lack of a market for unwanted horses seem to be the major contributing factors leading to the increase of large animal neglect situations. In several cases, animals were either removed or the owner voluntarily agreed to sell or surrender them. Charges were brought in at least three cases.

Other news

North Dakota Veterinary Medical Association

The 2009 NDVMA convention will be held Aug. 5-7, at the Grand International in Minot. Check the NDVMA website at www.ndvma.com for details.

Websites

The North Dakota State University Veterinary Diagnostic Lab (NDSU-VDL) website is www.vdl.ndsu.edu/

The North Dakota Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners (NDBVME) website is <http://ndbvme.org/>

Electronic health certificate update

GlobalVetLink has implemented secure, electronic signatures within its EIA certificate system for veterinary practice and diagnostic laboratory accounts, generated through the eHealth Management System.

USDA-APHIS Veterinary Services (VS) will now accept electronic certificates for the interstate movement of horses. The results of the EIA tests can be appended to the certificates, and the electronic signatures on the results will be accepted as equivalent to an original signature. These electronic documents will be considered the original, official EIA certificate, allowing horse owners to travel with the electronic signatures without requiring an additional ink signature.

GlobalVetLink now has signed license agreements with 45 states and is adding more veterinary practices and diagnostic laboratories.

Pet sheltering workshop slated in Minot

A pet sheltering workshop will be held Aug. 4, at the Grand International in Minot. Registration begins at noon with the workshop running from 12:30 to 5:30 p.m. Sponsored by the State Board of Animal Health and presented by Noah's Wish, a national animal disaster response group, the workshop helps communities develop a pet sheltering plan and educate interested parties in the following:

- Personal and community preparedness
- Animal intake process and procedures
- Shelter information
- Managing spontaneous volunteers
- Safety in the post-disaster environment

The workshop is free, but pre-registration is requested for planning purposes. For more information or to register, contact the board at 701-328-2350 or at doa-bah@nd.gov.



Animal Health News

is published by

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Staff changes

Heather Schaan is the new office assistant with the Board of Animal Health, succeeding Becki Bass, who is moving to the Surrey area. Heather will assist with the animal identification and Johne's disease programs and other duties.

Heather is a native of Rugby. Her husband, Blake, is a noxious weed specialist for the North Dakota Department of Agriculture.



Heather Schaan

Hoeven names two to BOAH

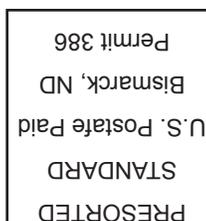
Gov. John Hoeven appointed Melvin Leland, Sidney, MT, to the State Board of Animal Health in December.

He succeeds Jeff Dahl of Gackle who served 14 years on the board, representing the purebred beef industry. Jeff's commitment to livestock health in North Dakota was evident in the time he served on the board, and is much appreciated.

Hoeven also appointed Dr. Morgan Dallman, Beulah, as one of the two practicing veterinarians on the board. Dallman succeeds Dr. Richard Roth, Fargo. Roth's many years of practice experience were a great benefit to the board during his seven years of service.

E-mail updates from the Board of Animal Health

Veterinarians can now get periodic e-mail updates from the BOAH with timely information on disease situations. Send an e-mail to tcelley@nd.gov, or call (701) 328-2655 to be included on the e-mail list.



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