

ANIMAL HEALTH NEWSLETTER FINAL ISSUE 2011

As always, if you have questions or comments about this letter or its contents feel free to contact Dr. Paul Kohrs at 360-902-1835. Your input is greatly appreciated. If you have an appropriate item to include in a future newsletter, e-mail Dr. Paul Kohrs at pkohrs@agr.wa.gov.

NEWS FROM OTHER STATES AND USDA

As I have mentioned in an earlier newsletter the USDA has discontinued NAIS as an animal disease traceability program. That tasks the individual states to prove that they have the capabilities to do a trace. There will be more details about this later in the letter.

I wanted to mention it here as a background into the new approach to handling TB and Brucellosis affected herds. As we review the TB and Brucellosis information you may notice that some states have more than one herd affected by either disease and by the old approach, these states would lose the coveted free status. As it is, with the new regulations, state officials are allowed to investigate and test the herds and if they show containment, then they don't lose status. There has also been a careful analysis done to determine whether it is possible to test out of the infection or if depopulation is the best option.

Montana and Wyoming both have had Brucellosis infected animals/herds this past year, and it has been determined that these infected herds most likely contracted the disease from wildlife. The Greater Yellowstone Area (GYA) has a significant region that is in a Designated Surveillance Area (DSA). This DSA in both Montana and Wyoming has had several boundary changes throughout the year that in most cases enlarged the surveillance area. This is cause for concern as we continue to receive cattle from these areas, especially from Montana.

The other news in the area of Brucellosis is the dramatic drop in slaughter surveillance that was implemented by USDA. Our state has only one cow processing facility that is sending blood samples from slaughter to a centralized lab. This number is only about 7% of the cattle slaughtered in the state. Dr. Eldridge has expressed his concern to USDA and the cattle industry has expressed their concerns to the congressional delegation about this development. So far there has been no comment from either entity. I will give you updates in later letters.

TB was diagnosed in a herd in South Dakota in October. The investigation is ongoing and the extent of the outbreak has not been completely determined as of yet. California also had a dairy herd affected this year as well. The investigation has not been completed as of yet and the interesting point about this herd is that the TB strain has not been seen before. South Dakota has a strain that is Mexican in origin as are many of the cases we have seen in the US. Our efforts to prevent the introduction of TB are at times cumbersome, but the risk is there, especially with the movement of cattle in our modern production systems and the risk from timed event cattle.

The Texas Equine Piroplasmosis (EP) outbreak has been contained with a tremendous amount of information gained about this disease in terms of testing and treatment. There will be some scientific papers presented and published that will give some very useful information in terms of handling this disease from a regulatory standpoint as well as treatment of individual animals. There has been a continuing trickle of positive horses discovered primarily in the quarter horse racing industry, and some states have implemented increased testing requirements for this segment of the industry. Washington has chosen not to change our regulations at this point, but rather monitor developments as they happen. The Texas outbreak is considered completed and a total of 412 horses out of 2489 were positive (16.5%). In contrast, nationwide testing has discovered only 178 additional horses out of 147,208 tested (0.1%). This very low incidence is especially important for export markets and even further compartmentalized in the Quarter horse racing industry.

WASHINGTON ANIMAL HEALTH NEWS

2011 has certainly been challenging for the Animal Services Division. It seems that wave after wave of budget cuts have come our way, but we have somehow survived another year. To help control costs, we have been instructed to suspend rulemaking with exceptions made depending on the nature of the rules and where the directive comes from. In December we had rules hearings in response to the legislature's action in the 2011 session. SHB 1538 authorized the department to write rules making diversion of a shipment en route and lack of a physical address, illegal. The legislature also authorized the department to charge a transaction assessment at livestock inspection to fund the animal disease traceability efforts of the department. Unfortunately, this rule, as written, was not satisfactory to all segments of the cattle industry and has been postponed until after the current legislative session, to be revisited by industry and the department.

Our contract with FDA was set to expire in September and we did an analysis of the true cost of doing the investigations as they now require them to be done. The costs were more than what the FDA was willing to pay, so for the time being, we have discontinued our role as FDA investigators. The good news is that the incidence of tissue residue in the dairy industry has now dropped to zero in the state for most of 2011. The State of Washington is not listed in the FSIS state list with residues in the last twelve months. We would like to think that this is the result, in part, of the five workshops that were held around the state in late March and April. This was a cooperative effort between Animal Services, Food Safety and WSU-Extension and we hope this trend will continue! Thanks to everyone who is now taking appropriate steps to prevent residues and keep up the good work.

The news on milk antibiotic residues is not quite as good for 2011. The pounds of milk condemned for 2011(469,722) was up 36% from 2010 (369,722), so you can see there is still work to be done in this area. Both of these numbers are lower than the 2009 figure of 755,558.

As the demand for dairy products increases world wide it behooves us as veterinarians to make sure we keep ourselves, as well as our clients, updated on residue issues and product introductions to prevent residues in milk and meat.

Our last mare that had been quarantined for CEM was tested and cleared in August. If you remember, this was from the original outbreak in 2009 and the final testing consent was the result of efforts of many people to persuade a reluctant owner to do the testing and treatment to qualify for the release. Dr. Dana Dobbs in Ellensburg did an outstanding job working with the private veterinarian of record and the owner to accomplish the necessary procedures. Washington State had one other CEM mare that was tested only on the CF test. This mare was exposed to a stallion that turned up as a dangerous contact to an infected stallion that had died. This test was negative as well. So at this writing, all is quiet on the CEM front.

Of course we could not let this report go by without discussing the EHV-1 outbreak in May. This was a significant event for the equine community with many shows and events cancelled. As you probably know the disease was traced to the Cutting Horse Championships in Ogden, Utah. Washington ended up with 9 cases of which one was euthanized for a chronic lameness and not from primary neurological signs. Our office chose to (as did many states) operate under a voluntary quarantine system which, according to reports we received back from industry, was the best way to manage the outbreak. We got tremendous cooperation from the equine industry and I am sure this shortened the course of the outbreak. We also used the WSDA website to disseminate correct information.

Almost simultaneously we began to experience an outbreak of Q fever in a goat herd in Eastern Washington. The significance of this became apparent when we began to receive reports of illness in humans. Eight individuals, that had links to the index farm, became clinically ill, and all have recovered except one who remains under treatment and observation. After extensive investigation in cooperation with USDA, CDC and Washington Department of Health, the herds were finally released from quarantine and best management practices to prevent human illness. This is a very hard disease to manage from a regulatory aspect as the contamination from the organism is so widespread and varies so much in pathogenicity. Hopefully we have learned something from this outbreak and will be better prepared should we be faced with another outbreak.

ANIMAL DISEASE TRACEABILITY-David Hecimovich

Animal Disease Traceability (ADT) has been on the forefront of projects of Animal Services for this past year. As was mentioned earlier, the 2011 Legislature gave us the opportunity to get started, because recent actions of USDA have made the necessity of preparations to meet their coming requirements a priority. Dr. Eldridge has spent countless hours explaining the need and working with industry to get a workable program in place that is affordable and acceptable to all

segments of the cattle industry. The cattle industry is the focus at this point with other species to follow. The following summarizes the high points of this change that is coming:

- The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) recently published a proposed rule, regarding traceability, for livestock moving interstate that will establish a minimum official identification and document requirements. Under the proposed rule, unless specifically exempted, livestock would have to be officially identified and accompanied by an Interstate Certificate of Veterinary Inspection (ICVI) or other forms of documentation as agreed upon by animal health officials in the shipping and receiving state. The current interstate regulations for horses, sheep, goats, swine and poultry will change very little.
- When cattle are moved interstate, an ICVI and individual identification would be required on all dairy, rodeo and show cattle regardless of age. There are temporary exemptions for beef cattle under 18 months of age (feeder cattle) and movements directly to slaughter. USDA does not indicate when the temporary exemptions will expire.
- The rule would recognize the official identification currently being used for cattle such as regulatory silver and orange metal tags, USDA Animal Identification Number (AIN) Devices (RFID 840 tags) and Location Based Number (an official premises identification number with a unique herd management number). The rule would also allow other forms of identification agreed on by animal health officials in the state of origin and state of destination, including but not limited to, brands, tattoos and breed registry certificates. The proposed rule also has a provision to prevent retagging an animal with a second official device; the exception, if an animal has an official metal tag, a second AIN device may be applied and there are provisions for a state veterinarian to apply an additional regulatory tag so the animal can be tested. WSDA now offers an RFID device for Brucellosis vaccination. The RFID device is unique to Washington and is applied in place of the metal Brucellosis tag when cattle are Adult or Calfhood vaccinated. If your clients are currently using RFID in their farm management practices, you now have the flexibility to offer either an RFID device or metal tag when vaccinating. For more information on the RFID Brucellosis tag please visit WSDA Animal ID website at: <http://agr.wa.gov/FoodAnimal/AnimalID/tags.aspx>.

Washington producers will see minimal effects of this rule; however, USDA's goal was to impose the least burden on producers to achieve animal disease traceability in the United States. Individual states will now bear the cost for Animal Disease Traceability. States will be responsible for implementing a traceability system that will achieve national traceability performance standards on interstate livestock movements and livestock movements within that state. The comment period on the proposed rule closed December 9, 2011 with the final rule estimated to be published in 2012.

FAD INVESTIGATIONS AND ACTIVITIES-Dr. Paul Kohrs

2011 was a relatively quiet year for actual investigations in Washington. Dr. Jerry Pospisil investigated an alpaca reported to have oral vesicular lesions, but after testing, foreign animal disease was ruled out. This investigation was in November and it brought up the point once again that when you see suspicious oral vesicular lesions on FMD susceptible species we need to be notified very soon/immediately if practical. This owner was reluctant to have the animal examined and tested due to cost issues and the investigation was delayed considerably. Getting a history of travel and visitors is essential as well when you do your physical exam. In this case there was significant travel, so there was cause for concern. If this had been the unthinkable-a case of FMD- it would have been widely spread by the time we even had a chance to investigate, much less confirm the diagnosis. Dr. Lyndon Badcoe investigated a goat with “oral” lesions in October that turned out to be a case of contagious ecthyma. We do investigate these incidents when reported and will never ignore anyone that brings them to our attention.

The other FAD activities for the year centered on FMD preparedness. Several table tops were held throughout the state to heighten the awareness of this disease to producers and responders alike. Fortunately, Korea now has their outbreak under control and has done extensive vaccinating to help in the control. The tabletop exercises were at the request of the Governor, as I mentioned in the last letter, and we have found great value in indentifying gaps in the response from disposal to quarantine actions. Many of the gaps have been addressed, but there are still some left. For example a significant gap was recently identified in the recovery phase that did not allow for assistance for producers that are in a quarantine zone but are not infected. Movement controls have the potential to put them out of business without even having the disease. Producers need to seek assistance to develop continuity of operations plans in the event that a worst case scenario is thrust upon them. More training was obtained in communication to the public in the face of an outbreak that will get our messages out without creating public panic.

SWINE HEALTH PROGRAM- Dr. Jerry Pospisil

Since the last newsletter, the staff from the department has done 52 surveys to determine the final use of garbage in the form of meat scrap garbage from restaurants, grocery stores and meat markets. This has resulted in the discovery of two farms that are feeding the garbage to their hogs: one in Eastern Washington and one on Vashon Island. Both of these farms are now in compliance. As our society becomes more and more aware of the waste that ends up in landfills, we can expect to see this type of activity increase and there is definitely nutritional value in this source of food, but it must be handled correctly to minimize the risk of disease transmission.

The garbage feeder inspections consist of checking the cooking apparatus making sure it is adequate, checking the cooking temperature to determine if the apparatus is sufficient to bring

the temperature to boiling, and inspecting the farm itself, making sure the uncooked garbage is handled correctly and is not accessible to the pigs and that the pens are adequate and well maintained. If you recall from our discussions of FMD this is one of the most common methods of spread from one country to another, and swine are tremendous multipliers of the virus when they are exposed.

AVIAN HEALTH INVESTIGATIONS AND SURVEILLANCE- Dr. Lyndon Badcoe

Following an outbreak of infectious laryngotracheitis (ILT) in commercial poultry, Pierce County commercial poultry producers were reminded about the risks for transmission of ILT and about the fact sheet on ILT at the WSDA Avian Health web page. Gaps in the biosecurity program are responsible for most ILT outbreaks. Transport of chickens, equipment and manure that is contaminated with the ILT virus can lead to mechanical transmission. The cooperation of commercial poultry producers was requested to refrain from using the Chick Embryo Origin (CEO) ILT vaccine, except following consultation with the State veterinarian.

Routine surveillance for avian influenza led to the detection of two birds, in separate flocks, that tested suspect for avian influenza. Laboratory investigation of poultry from one farm revealed that it was not AI, but rather an overdose of a poultry vaccine and chronic parasitism. Avian influenza virus was not cultured when samples from these birds were submitted to NVSL. Surveillance at the live poultry sales at Washington sale yards is ongoing with continued negative results.

NPIP News: Four new small poultry producers were inspected, tested and certified for the National Poultry Improvement Plan. Testing and certification of existing small poultry producers and exhibition poultry producers continued. Due to a delay in the release of Federal cooperative agreement funds in the first quarter of 2011, testing and certification of existing poultry producers had to cease. In July 2011, Federal cooperative agreement funds became available and so there was a need for increased NPIP testing and certification in an effort to catch up.

Dr. Lyndon Badcoe gave two invited presentations on poultry health, disease prevention, biosecurity and the National Poultry Improvement Plan (NPIP) at the Washington State University, Puyallup extension center and the Kitsap Poultry Growers Cooperative. One presentation has been published on the Washington State University web site at the address below:

<https://docs.google.com/open?id=0B8qBzK9nHFaEZGFIMTRhNTQtZGRjMy00Nzk4LTgxOTgtMzI3MzdiMjMyYjgy>

SCRAPIE-Dr. Ben Smith

A large emphasis was placed on education during the 2011 fair season and its captive audience. USDA-provided “Going to the Show”, “ABC’s of Scrapie” and the little yellow “National Scrapie Eradication Guide” brochures were placed at fairs around the state. With 71 fairs throughout the state, we had a presence at 75% and provide written brochures, as well as, personal contact with producers, 4-H, FFA members, and the public. Dr. Ben Smith attempted to recruit goat owners and producers to utilize USDA labs, hoping to increase scrapie surveillance on goats. While at the fairs, we also looked for scrapie tag compliance and found 100% compliance at fairs visited by Dr. Smith. The sheep and goat superintendants are well-educated and are very cooperative.

Washington also has a new slaughter facility in Auburn, WA that contacted the department requesting a refrigerator for keeping sheep and goat heads cool until an animal health technician could come take samples.

The last quarter scrapie program has been fairly quiet. Program staff attended the Washington State Sheep Producers convention that was held in Olympia this year. Dr. Eldridge discussed programs within the department that would affect sheep producers.

On December 13, Grant County Public Health put on a meeting for goat producers and invited WSDA to come and discuss Q fever and also talked about scrapie rules and tagging. About 8 producers were present for the meeting. We are planning a large sheep and goat meeting for early 2012.

RESERVE VETERINARY CORPS- Dr. Cynthia Faux

RVC members have participated in a number of activities this year including attendance at regional Foreign Animal Disease tabletop exercises in Pasco and Pullman. Members also participated in a large animal technical rescue course in Benton City, WA in June. Several members were able to complete their annual respirator fit testing refresher at the WSVMA annual conference in Yakima in October. RVC members also attended an Emergency Operations Center orientation at the state EOC facilities at Camp Murray. Several RVC veterinarians participated in an FMD risk communication workshop hosted by the Dairy Federation in December. We appreciate the continuing interest and participation of RVC members and hope to increase the number of activities available to members in 2012.