

REPORT OF THE USAHA/AAVLD COMMITTEE ON AQUACULTURE

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The Committee met on November 14, 2010 at the Minneapolis Hilton Hotel in Minneapolis, Minn., from 12:30-5:00pm. There were 12 members and 12 guests present. The Committee began with the following presentations.

The Fitness of Real Time PCR Testing for VHSV Surveillance:

Nick Phelps, University of Minnesota; Kathy Kurth, Wisconsin Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory; Janet Warg, National Veterinary Services Laboratory (NVSL)

At the 2008 USAHA/AAVLD meeting, the Aquaculture Committee proposed a resolution entitled "Use and Interpretation of Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) Results for Viral Hemorrhagic Septicemia Virus (VHSV)". The resolution was passed by USAHA. Recently APHIS-VS-NVSL has put in place a group of cooperative agreements that fund a group of laboratories to conduct validation of real time PCR methods for VHSV. Janet Warg, reported that APHIS funded a multilaboratory PCR trial in response to the USAHA resolution. Kathy Kurth, coordinator of the trial, described the goals and arrangement of the validation effort. Nick Phelps described quantitative PCR technology and presented details of the assays to be included in the trial.

Update on the National Aquatic Animal Pathogen Testing Network (NAAPT)

Kevin Snekvik, Washington Animal Disease Diagnostic Lab

At the 2009 USAHA/AAVLD meeting, the Committee proposed a resolution entitled "Federal Funding for an Aquatic Animal Laboratory Network" that also included a detailed proposal for the structure and implementation of the NAAPT. A NAAPT Steering Committee was formed in the spring of 2010 and has had one in-person meeting and two conference calls. A technical committee was appointed to develop a cell culture and PCR confirmation assay for VHS. Unresolved at this time are plans for implementation of the NAAPT and a method to fund this effort. Kevin Snekvik discussed the history of the NAAPT since 2009. Overviews the development of the NAAPT steering committee and VHSV technical committee including the Technical committees evaluation of SOPs for viral culture and PCR confirmation at NVSL.

Update on the National List of Reportable Animal Diseases (NLRAD) Draft Plan

Jerry Heidel, Oregon Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory; Ellen Kasari, USDA-APHIS-CEAH

Discussion of aquatic animal disease reporting has long been an issue before the NLRAD. Issues have included which diseases to report, how to collect the data, and the confidentiality of reported data. This effort must now be integrated with the NAAHP and the NAAPT. Ellen Kasari and Jerry Heidel described the national list of reportable animal diseases and its impact on aquaculture. Discussion points included the criteria to include aquaculture pathogens on the list of reportable diseases. A draft of a white paper regarding the NHRS has been completed but has not been released to the public yet. The differences in notifiable and monitored diseases were explained. Committee discussion centered around the relationship between this list and other state, national and international aquaculture pathogen lists and the potential impacts on aquaculture.

The Regulation of Aquatic Animal Diseases under the Injurious Species Provision of the Lacey Act.

Joel Bader, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS); Peter Merrill, USDA-APHIS

The USFWS recently published a request for information in the Federal Register [Docket No. FWS–R9–FHC–2009–0093; 94140–1342–0000–N5]. In that request they asked for information relevant to the potential listing of “Amphibians infected with *Batrachochytrium dendrobatidis* (chytrid fungus)” as an injurious species. If this were to come to pass, it would be the first animal disease (exclusive of Title 50) to be regulated by this agency and through this mechanism. Joel Bader discussed the USFWS’s statutory authority to regulate aquatic animal diseases. The Federal register listing is a request for information regarding the regulation of *Batrachochytrium dendrobatidis*. Committee discussion centered the appropriateness of regulating any animal diseases through injurious species list of the Lacey Act.

Committee Business

The draft resolution “United States National List of Reportable Animal Diseases (NLRAD)” was brought to the Committee by Jerry Heidel of the Committee on Animal Health Surveillance and Information System with a request for support by the Aquaculture committee. The Committee discussed the resolution and voted to support it as written.

A draft resolution regarding use of the Lacey Act to regulate animal pathogens was put forward and discussed by the Committee. After revision the draft resolution was approved by the Committee.