

REPORT OF THE USAHA/AAVLD COMMITTEE ON ANIMAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

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Pat Blanchard, Tulare, CA

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The Committee met on Saturday, October 14, 2006 from 8:00am-5:00pm at the Hilton Minneapolis Hotel, Minneapolis, Minnesota. There were 145 attendees including 29 committee members. Power points of all committee presentations are available at www.usaha.org/committees/aem. Pat Blanchard reviewed the committee accomplishments for the past year. The committee met 11 times by monthly conference call and once face-to-face in Louisville, Ky. Activities included:

- All-hazards subcommittee was created and they produced a resolution on the handling of all species and all hazards emergencies which will be voted on later in the meeting.
- Reviewed United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) contracted Lesson Learned developed by CNACorp from past animal events and exercises and identified 12 of the 36 recommendations as the highest priorities. These were forwarded to USDA Associate Deputy Administrator for Emergency Management and Diagnostics (EMD), Jose Diez, to address USDA's progress and plans at the meeting.
- Drafted letters to USDA, Agriculture Research Service (ARS), Department of Homeland Security (DHS), and Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to accompany the committee's October 2005 recommendation on Disinfectants. All except DHS responded. EPA has taken the lead on an interagency working group which is addressing the recommendation as part of High Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) activities. A July 2006 letter from EPA was received updating the committee on progress.
- Monthly meetings and email distributions have served as a venue to share information on upcoming meetings, events and activities related to emergency management such as Government Coordinating Council (GCC) minutes, credentialing workgroup progress, national carcass disposal concerns, types of personal protective equipment (PPE) and related training issues, etc.
- Discussed and supported the National Livestock Continuity of Business Plan demonstration project.
- Identified key initiatives at National Institute for Animal Agriculture (NIAA) April meeting including:
 - Need for a stronger and consistent funding stream to states to fully integrate and implement emergency preparedness with industry, local, state and federal partners.
 - Rapidly deployable funding to agriculture during emergencies to re-establish productivity and business operation.

Dr. Lee Myers, Georgia State Veterinarian, gave an overview of the Government Coordinating Council role and membership, and the Food and Agriculture Sector Council. She explained the need to engage and respond to the request from DHS to review and update the Food and Agriculture Sector specific plan which is part of National Infrastructure Protection Plan (NIPP). They were asked to take part in August with a December deadline. Currently they are requesting for extension so that states can provide meaningful input. Denise Spencer is a USDA contact on effort. Drs. Brigid Echols and Marilyn Simunich are working

with Lee Myers on the response and recommends that the Committee on Animal Emergency Management (CAEM) develop a Subcommittee to assist.

Mr. John Monson, Director of the Farm Services Agency (FSA) in Minnesota, presented information on the criteria to qualify for assistance, mechanism, time line and process by which funding in the form of low interest loans is made available to agriculture. The process, requirements and time lines vary based on the type of request. The three types of emergency designation request and approval processes are a Presidential Emergency/Major Disaster Declaration; a Secretarial designation request; and the FSA Administrator's physical loss notification request.

Dr. Jose Diez, EMD, Veterinary Services (VS), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), USDA, presented the progress and plans related to the 12 priority recommendations identified by the Committee from the CNACorp Lessons Learned report which grouped into 4 categories: USDA roles, responsibilities and processes; disposal; movement and quarantine; and state and local planning. The National Animal Health Emergency Management Systems (NAHEMS) guidelines are available via CD or the web after registering for access. USDA plans to conduct with states, 60 AI exercises in 2007 using HPAI scripts developed by CNACorp. He briefly discussed the roles and responsibilities of the current 19 area emergency coordinators (AEC) and encouraged state and industry people to contact the person for their state if they have not heard from them. The AECs were heavily engaged in the HPAI efforts this year. He will continue to support hiring more AECs to ensure adequate coverage for every state. He briefly discussed challenges of juggling increasing new mandates for USDA such as Pets Evacuation and Transportation Standards (PETS) Act with status quo staffing. Finally, he explained his management style and plans to continue to be engaged outside the beltway with constituencies.

Dr. Glen Garris, Director National Veterinary Stockpile, presented the mission, progress, stock pile materials, deployment methods and authorization, and intended use of materials in the National Veterinary Stockpile.

Dr. Sebastian Heath has been detailed for one year to the USDA Homeland Security Office (HSO) and is a liaison with DHS. One of his roles is to identify agencies and groups with common goals that are working on the same product and encourage them to work together. He reviewed HSO accomplishments which is responsible for USDA department-wide coordination of efforts related to homeland security. Other agency activities that were briefly discussed: Food Safety Inspection Service (FSIS) development of prescribed mission assignments with Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA); Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and EPA on carcass management; Department of Transportation (DOT); and Rural Development office of business continuity awards competitive grants which might be resource for funds for the National Livestock Continuity of Business Plan (COBP) demo project. The Committee and others might consider seeking input on the language in the Farm Bill that defines selection criteria for these grants. He reviewed activities of Food and Agriculture Sector and Government Coordinating Councils; DHS Infrastructure Protection Directorate (national performance goals, NIPP and criticality. DHS set the deadline for the sector specific plans of the NIPP so they are the only one who can change the deadline so letters from various associations (United States Animal Health Association (USAHA), National Association of State Departments of Agriculture (NASDA), etc) should be sent to them. Homeland Security Institute has been contracted to develop methodology by which states can assess their critical infrastructure. DHS Office of Grants and Training (OGT) has completed four Homeland Security Exercise Evaluation Program Manuals and are almost done with a fifth. If your exercise design and after action report is compliant with their guidelines funding is more likely to be available. Homeland Security Grants Program this year had an increase in funding to state agriculture. Thirty-five states received some funds that included agriculture. Approximately \$9 million has been funded to eighteen states for primary agriculture investments. Twenty-four states funded for integrated investments which included items for agriculture like broad based training, interoperable communications, etc. The Homeland Security Grants for 2007 Guidelines will go out late November and are due back late January 2007 with funding released in April 2007. There will be more emphasis on filling target capability gaps. Credentialing is moving

forward through a workgroup under the oversight of the National Incident Management (NIM) Integration Center. Items to watch:

- Exercises – make them doable not overwhelming, build confidence and capability in steps.
- DHS and Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) have formed a grants coordinating committee to reach agreement on cooperative agreements and competitive grants language.
- May form a committee with USDA in future.
- FEMA reorganization.

Dr. Tom McGinn, Director Veterinary and Agricultural Security, Chief Medical Office, Department of Homeland Security, gave an update on DHS activities related to animal emergency management. He recommended members review the Congressional Research Report on Agroterrorism issued August 2006. This provides good material to support the value of why states need more funding to effectively prepare. He also discussed Plum Island and open positions under recruitment; DHS Centers for Excellence; Lawrence Livermore National Laboratories, National Biosurveillance Information System which Dr. Kimothy Smith now directs; Vulnerability assessments; developing a search engine for OGT to be able to track funding by critical infrastructure; Aftermath of Hurricanes and Food and Agriculture GCC and Sector Coordinating Council (SCC) new hires funded by DHS at state and industry level.

Dr. Tom Kasari, Analytical Epidemiologist, USDA/APHIS/VS/Center for Epidemiology and Animal Health (CEAH)/Center for Animal Disease Information and Analysis (CADIA) gave a presentation on Pathways Analysis, Risk Analysis, Regionalization, and Compartmentalization: Tools to Keep Interstate Commerce Flowing

John Adams, National Milk Producers Federation (NMPF), gave a brief overview on the reasons behind the Committee Resolution in support of the National Livestock Continuity of Business Plan (COBP) Demo Project. The draft project with 11 goals was sent to committee members in September.

Lt Colonel Chuck Tilton, and Major Mike Simpson presented the Civil Support Team overview of their role, responsibility, deployment process, analytical capabilities and their interest and willingness to collaborate and assist during an agricultural emergency.

Sandra Amass, Purdue University, reviewed the functionality, access and use of their on-line community resource tracking and management tool which is county or district based with only 1-2 emergency managers in each county with approved access. She also reviewed the Purdue Distance Learning Graduate Program in Veterinary Homeland Security which is applicable to anyone in animal emergency response, not just veterinarians. The certificate course requiring 4.5 credit hours, is provided on line or by CD and must be registered with Purdue Graduate Division. Currently four courses have been developed. Cost is \$255.00 per credit hour (15 lectures). Format is video with audio and power point slides, audio with power point slides or transcript only. Fourty-seven registered currently from 21 states. For more information on any of these programs go to their website National Biosecurity Resource Center at www.BiosecurityCenter.org. The site also includes a disinfectant resource search tool.

Dr. Leslie Cole, Oklahoma Assistant State Veterinarian, presented information on the development and conduct of a USDA certified Command and General Staff course provided in Oklahoma this past year. She suggested these efforts and material should not be lost and that the course should be put on by others. Dr. Dave Warner, VS stated that USDA plans to sponsor two sessions per year. Participants viewed this as very realistic and a rigorous training course for both team and individual efforts to certify people in their functional position as a Type II incident management team member. The course requires more trainers, evaluators, coaches and players than actual students.

Jane Colavecchi, Kirkwood Community College, presented information on their DHS funded AgTerror Emergency Responder Course and Master Trainer Course. Both are intended for animal foreign animal disease emergencies. One is geared more towards first responders who also become qualified at training officers and is intended to orient them to how agriculture emergencies are handled in a state. The Kirkwood trainers will come to the state and teach the course incorporating the state's specific agriculture emergency response plans and statutes and authorities. The Master Trainer Course will be held Feb. 7-9 in San Antonio, there is travel funds available for two people per state from state department of agriculture or animal health and/or emergency management agency. Website for more information is www.agterror.org. The course is endorsed by USDA, Western Institute for Food Safety (WIFS); University of California, Davis; Center for Food Security and Public Health, Iowa State University (ISU); and the National Center for Foreign Animal and Zoonotic Disease Defense (NCFAZDD), Texas A & M University.

Elizabeth Pyke, Iowa Governor's Washington DC legislative group provided information on how to develop a strategy and the challenges associated with soliciting federal funds from Congress for state agricultural emergency preparedness. What is the problem that needs fixing? Why is federal assistance needed? What is benefit to all congressional districts? Form coalitions; make sure Congress is able to do it (authority, etc). Repeat it often. Challenges are: Congressional jurisdiction for agriculture vs. homeland security within committees; agriculture is seen as local issue, low priority, not affecting many; coalitions are not formed; Congress is focused elsewhere; states are not seen as integral to animal emergency response; and Congress does not understand how agriculture works nationally (movement, etc). There is a need to show national impact, link to preparedness goals, educate, include zoonotic potential and public panic which are potentially preventable outcomes. DHS now has bulk of new monies, but USDA has authorities in emergency. She provided an overview of a comprehensive package which the multi-state midwest consortium are working on and will share with the CAEM when they have completed the partners review.

Business Meeting:

Bob Ehart, National Association of State Departments of Agriculture (NASDA) gave an update on the work of the All Hazards Subcommittee and the evolution of the current resolution, as well as the outreach efforts to engage other groups, including non-government organizations, into review and input. He particularly noted the tremendous efforts of Dr. Kevin Dennison, Colorado Veterinary Medical Foundation, and noteworthy consistent and invaluable review and input by Dr. Cindy Lovern, American Veterinary Medical Association. The Subcommittee will sunset after the resolution is passed. The resolution was discussed and a few revisions and additions were made.

The National Livestock COBP Resolution and National Carcass and Specified Risk Material Disposal Resolutions were discussed with very minor edits.

All three Resolutions passed unanimously with a quorum of the Committee voting in person or by proxy. No members volunteered for the Subcommittee on the Sector Specific Plan of the NIPP. Marilyn will forward material to the full Committee for input.

Future conference calls will continue to be the last Thursday of the month at 11:00a.m. Eastern time.