

## REPORT OF THE USAHA/AAVLD COMMITTEE ON AQUACULTURE

Co-Chairs: Andrew E. Goodwin, Pine Bluff, AR  
Kevin R. Snekvik, Pullman, WA

Marilyn Blair, ID; Deborah L. Brennan, MS; Stan D. Bruntz, CO; Jones W. Bryan, SC; William W. Buisch, NC; Tony A. Caver, SC; Ria de Grassi, CA; Robert G. Ehlenfeldt, WI; James M. Foppoli, HI; Nancy A. Frank, MI; Suzanne N. Gibbons-Burgener, WI; Burke L. Healey, NC; Donald E. Hoenig, ME; Frederic J. Hoerr, AL; Sherman W. Jack, MS; Myron J. Kebus, WI; Lester H. Khoo, MS; Scott E. LaPatra, ID; Tsang Long Lin, IN; Vader M. Loomis, PA; John R. MacMillian, AR; Phillip M. Mamer, ID; Mr. Larry D. Mark, VA; Otis Miller, NC; Regg D. Neiger, SD; Lanny W. Pace, MS; Charles Palmer, CA; Kristine R. Petrini, MN; Nick Phelps, MN; Jill B. Rolland, MD; James A. Roth, IA; John P. Sanders, WV; A. David Scarfe, IL; Tara J. Schnell, WI; Robert M. S. Temple, OH; Norman G. Willis, ONT.

The Committee met on October 26, 2008 at the Sheraton Greensboro Hotel in Greensboro, North Carolina, from 12:30-5:30 p.m. There were 14 members and 21 guests present. The Committee session opened with introduction of the Co-Chairs.

Dr. Jerry Heidel, Oregon State University, presented the National Animal Health Reporting System (NAHRS) update. The background was discussed. The number of reportable organisms expanded from the original five to include additional pathogens and infectious agents for mollusks and crustaceans. Reference for establishing diagnosis initially the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) reference manual, this was expanded to include diagnoses established from either OIE or American Fisheries Society (AFS) Blue Book; this change has passed NAHRS steering committee.

Topics for next year include:

- define animal species included in system;
- attempt to work out diagnosis that was similar for OIE and AFS Blue book; and
- get state veterinarians, tribes and private laboratories into reporting system.

Dr. Jill Rolland, Veterinary Services (VS), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), presented the Update on the Interim Viral Hemorrhagic Septicemia (VHS) Federal Rule. She discussed the background of VHS within the Great Lakes, and key points within the interim rule were presented. See the following web site for the complete document: <http://www.nemw.org/VHSInterimRule.pdf>.

The comment period will end November 10, 2008 as described in the Federal Register, but the rule will not be implemented on November 10, 2008. There will soon be a notice in the Federal Register delaying the Interim Rule for an additional 60 days. During that period, APHIS will evaluate comments received by the November 10 deadline and anticipates releasing a revised rule some time during the 60 day period. That rule will also include an additional comment period effective from the date of publication of the revised rule in the Federal Register. Most comments received thus far refer to, 1) the requirement for a visual inspection of the fish within 72 hours prior to shipment (too expensive, not enough veterinarians to do the work), 2) the duration of validity test results, especially for farms on unprotected water sources (the test is good for 30 days but the actual testing process often takes at least 30 days to complete) and 3) that temperature requirements make testing impossible during some seasons. The revised interim rule is not expected to go into effect until March 2009.

Dr. Jill Rolland next presented Funding and Implementation of the National Aquatic Animal Health Plan (NAAHP). She shared a background of NAAHP, presented focus areas. Work group notes and additional information can be found at [http://www.aphis.usda.gov/animal\\_health/animal\\_dis\\_spec/aquaculture/naah\\_plan.shtml](http://www.aphis.usda.gov/animal_health/animal_dis_spec/aquaculture/naah_plan.shtml)

The draft of NAAHP is complete and currently is in the approval process for publication. Dr. Kevin Snekvik proposed a Resolution entitled, National Aquatic Animal Health Plan. Discussion by the Committee ensued regarding the wording of the Resolution. Agreement on the wording was reached by the Committee. A motion to vote was put forth by Phil Mamer. A vote was taken and there was unanimous

approval of the Resolution by the Committee. The Resolution is very similar to one passed by the Committee in 2006, but members felt that it was important to reaffirm their support for this important project.

Dr. Kevin Snekvik, Washington State University, presented information on the Aquatic Animal Diagnostic Laboratory Network.

He discussed the background on recent developments regarding the desire by university, state, federal and private laboratories involved in aquaculture disease diagnosis to form a laboratory network for disease diagnosis and surveillance. Initial meeting of multiple laboratories involved with fish, shrimp and mollusk disease diagnosis along with representatives from the USDA and National Veterinary Services Laboratory (NVSL) occurred on Friday, October 24, 2008. From this meeting a plan to meet with individuals involved with the National Animal Laboratory Network and the National Plant Laboratory Network in regards to how respective laboratories were conceived and organized.

Dr. Snekvik proposed a Resolution entitled, Federal Funding for an Aquatic Animal Laboratory Network Discussion by the Committee ensued regarding the wording of the Resolution. Agreement on the wording was reached by the Committee. A motion to vote was put forth by Nick Phelps. A vote was taken and there was unanimous approval of the Resolution by the Committee.

Dr. Rolland and Dr. Don Hoenig, Maine Department of Agriculture presented The Future of the Infectious Salmon Anemia (ISA) Program.

They provided a review of an outbreak of infectious salmon anemia virus in Maine and adjacent sites in Canada. January 2006 was the last outbreak in Maine; no clinical cases in approximately 22 months. In July/ Aug 2007 there were additional cases in Canada. Presentation of interactions with Cook Industries regarding surveillance for disease and the utilization of epidemiology and arrangement of sites to reduce occurrence of disease were also shared with the Committee.

This year there is reduction in funding for the ISA program to \$150,000 which is concurrent with reduction in staff dedicated to the program. There is ongoing work and transfer of ideas regarding containment of ISA and reduction in disease with Chile and their ongoing ISA outbreak.

Members of the Committee expressed interest in as motion to suggest increased support for the ISA program, but Dr. Hoenig felt that support for ISA would be an inevitable result of implementation of the NAAHP and that the Committee previous Resolution in support of the NAAHP was sufficient.

Dr. Ralph Elston, AquaTechnics, discussed Compartmentalization of Farmed Shellfish Operations in the Pacific Northwest. He provided review of Manila clam and Pacific oyster production in the Pacific Northwest and movement of animals along the west coast of the United States and Hawaii. Also he discussed seed export to European Union (EU). The main disease that has been an issue is Denman Island disease. Out of concern regarding this disease arose the EU directive in November 2003 that limited seed export to the EU, and EU Audit in June 2007. The concept of compartmentalization was described and possible ways to utilize compartmentalization in this situation. Industry needs include 1) the development of specific goals for the industry, 2) the formal unification of federal and state programs, and 3) adjust or augment surveillance. Compartmentalization could be applicable in some cases. Elston expressed his and the industry's appreciation for support they received from USDA-APHIS in industry's efforts to deal with the EU audit.

Mr. Nick Phelps, University of Minnesota, presented The Use and Interpretation of Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) Testing in Regulatory Fish Health. He gave a brief justification for the integration of PCR testing for viral hemorrhagic septicemia virus included in the third Resolution for the Committee.

Mr. Phelps proposed a Resolution entitled, Use and Interpretation of PCR results for VHSV. Discussion by the Committee ensued regarding the wording of the Resolution and issues of PCR test fitness for purpose. Agreement on the wording was reached by the Committee. A motion to vote was put forth by David Scarfe. A vote was taken and there was unanimous approval of the Resolution.

Committee Business:

The Committee approved three Resolutions as outlined in this report, and were forwarded to the Committee on Nominations and Resolutions.