REPORT OF THE USAHA/AAVLD COMMITTEE ON AQUACULTURE

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The Committee met on October 20, 2013 at the Town and Country Hotel, San Diego, California, from 12:30pm-5:30pm. There were 9 members and 8 guests present. Dr. Snekvik gave the introductions.

USDA-APHIS VS Updates

Dr. Lee Ann Thomas (for Dr. Janet Whaley) USDA-APHIS VS

USDA APHIS Veterinary Services - Aquaculture Update. The VS Aquatic Animal Health Program has made progress on several key recommendations in the National Aquatic Animal Health Plan (NAAHP). These include establishing an agency advisory committee (Subcommittee on Aquatic Animal Health), moving forward with a laboratory network (a NAHLN approach) and developing an IT infrastructure (APHIS Surveillance Collaboration services) to support aquatic animal health surveillance data. A summary of recent activities is below:

Subcommittee on Aquatic Animal Health (SAAH) – We continue to work with the SAAH (Federal Advisory Subcommittee). The primary focus of this advisory group is to provide guidance on implementing the National Aquatic Animal Health Plan (NAAHP). Their most recent recommendations are as follows:

- APHIS should utilize the current National Animal Health Laboratory Network (NAHLN) with an understanding that appropriate state and federal funding are necessary.
- APHIS should work collaboratively with industry, State, and Tribal stakeholders to develop a new national model for fish health regulation under the National Aquatic Animal Health Plan.
- APHIS should pursue zonation to facilitate international and interstate movement per the Plan.

Aquatic Animal Health Laboratory Network – Pursuit to the direction provided by the SAAH, VS is moving forward with an initiative that will add aquatic diagnostic testing under the NAHLN. We will employ a three phased approach to implement this testing.

- Phase I – In Fall 2013, we will invite participating NAHLN laboratories will to add protocols for VHS and infectious salmon anemia (ISA) testing to their repertoire in this phase.
- Phase II – In 2014, we will reach out to other Federal and State non-NAHLN laboratories (e.g., US Fish and Wildlife laboratories) and to private aquatic animal health testing laboratories about applying to the NAHLN. In addition, training opportunities will be offered to the non-NAHLN laboratories on meeting NAHLN requirements including details of administering quality management systems.
- Phase III – In 2015+, we will continue to add aquatic pathogen testing protocols based on a prioritized need.

Multi-agency Infectious Salmon Anemia (ISAV) Surveillance Project in the Pacific Northwest – We are continuing with the two year surveillance project for ISAV in wild and farmed salmon in the Pacific Northwest (as directed by Congress in amendment #893 of House Resolution (HR) 2112).

- Year One - sampling complete (wild and farmed); testing nearly complete for WA and AK. No ISAV findings.
- Year Two – sampling is underway; testing pending funding.

APHIS Viral Hemorrhagic Septicemia (VHSV IVb) Policy in the Great Lakes – Since the issuance of a Federal Order in 2006 that restricts the movement of 28 species of fish out of 8 Great Lakes state, no VHSIVb has been found on any aquaculture facilities. However, VHSV IVb continues to be reported in wild fish with the last report in May 2013 in 4 fish (2 gizzard shad, 1 yellow perch and 1 freshwater drum)

from a fish kill in New York. APHIS is completing a risk assessment to help inform our decision about the need to maintain the APHIS Emergency Federal Order.

Reorganization of USDA-APHIS-VS

Dr. Lee Ann Thomas (for Drs. Joyce Bowling-Heyward and Peter Merrill) USDA-APHIS VS

Dr. Thomas covered the drivers and guiding principles for the reorganization with gave the resulting VS structure which includes Surveillance, Preparedness and Response Services (SPRS), National Import/Export Services (NIES) and Science, Technology and Analysis (STAS). She also explained the key services that each of these sub-groups will provide. A key aspect of the reorganization is the formation of the 6 districts including their individual NIES Service centers which covers the entire country including Puerto Rico.

Canadian Import Requirements for US Aquatic Animals

Dr. Lee Ann Thomas (for Drs. Joyce Bowling-Heyward and Peter Merrill), USDA-APHIS VS

Dr. Thomas provided the time line for the implementation of these regulations. She mentioned that USDA-APHIS certifies live animals for culture, ornamental, research, live and dead cultured animals for Food servicers/retail use or further processing and aquatic products for bait and animal feed. NOAA Seafood Inspection Program certifies wild aquatic animal and all live mollusks for food services/retail use or further processing. She covered the key live aquatic animals that require the health certificates. Of importance is that there are no requirements for movement of tilapia. Health certificates must be issued by Category II APHIS-accredited veterinarian. She strongly suggested reviewing International Regulations (IREGS) (http://www.aphis.usda.gov/regulations/vs/iregs/animals/animal_canada.shtml) which would include the list of regulated species, animal export health certificates and instructions on how to complete these certificates. Diagnostic testing must be conducted at APHIS-approved laboratories (http://www.aphis.usda.gov/animal_health/lab_info_services/downloads/ApprovedLabs_Aquaculture.pdf)

Aquatic Animal Drug Approval Partnership (AADAP) Program: An Integral Partner for Aquaculture

Dr. Lester Khoo, Mississippi State University

The Aquatic Animal Drug Approval Partnership (AADAP) program is an integral component for the aquatic drug approvals. It manages the compassionate Investigational New Animal Drug (INAD) program that allows access to drugs/chemicals which would be unavailable otherwise to those involved in aquaculture. Animal safety and drug efficacy data generated through the INAD program has assisted in the drug approvals as well as extended label claims. AADAP is also a data generating partner for drug approvals and is an important resource for disseminating information on aquatic drugs. Loss of the AADAP program due to funding would be devastating for future drug approvals. Inadequate numbers of approved drugs/chemicals might drive those involved with aquaculture to consider non-approved drugs. It would also mean continued and greater dependence on imported seafood due to hampered US aquaculture. Use of aquaculture drugs is less regulated in other countries and even the limited FDA inspections and testing currently in place have revealed approximately 10% of the refusals of fisheries imports from January 2011 to August 2013 are due to drug adulterations.

Committee Business:

Resolutions:

In response to the AADAP presentation, a motion from the floor for a resolution to address this issue was made by Dr. Jerry Heidel and was seconded by Dr. David Scarfe. After discussion, the motion passed unanimously.

The Committee also discussed possible actions to support the resolution by engagement of the Government Relations Committee or politically through the producers and the National Aquaculture Association (NAA), American Veterinary Medical Association, and the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (AWFA), and the American Fisheries Society – Fish Culture Section.

Future Meetings:

1. Dr. Snekvik asked the committee if they are interested in including scientific presentations for the next committee meeting in Kansas City. Please send these suggestions to Drs. Snekvik and Khoo.

2. Dr. Snekvik announced that he will be stepping down after 2014 and requested recommendations of any AAVLD members to serve in his position.