

Animal Health News

Veterinary News from the North Dakota State Board of Animal Health

Board News

New member

In August, 2010, Gov. John Hoeven appointed Dave Pearson of Hettinger to succeed Paula Swenson as the sheep industry representative on the State Board of Animal Health.

Name change

If you call our office and hear someone announce “Animal Health Division,” don’t be alarmed. The office of the State Board of Animal Health is now referred to as the “Animal Health Division of the North Dakota Department of Agriculture.”

Next meeting

The next meeting of the State Board of Animal Health is scheduled for 9 a.m., Wednesday, Sept. 7, in the State Capitol in Bismarck.

E-mail updates

In response to veterinarian requests for timely information regarding disease situations, the BOAH is now offering periodic e-mail updates. To get on the list, send an e-mail to tcclley@nd.gov, or call (701) 328-2655.

ND veterinarians to meet in Fargo

The 2011 convention of the North Dakota Veterinary Medical Association will be held Aug. 14-16 at the Ramada Inn in Fargo.

Check the NDVMA website at www.ndvma.com for details.

Legislators tackle animal concerns

Several bills of interest to the Board of Animal Health were passed by the 2011 North Dakota Legislature and signed into law by Gov. Jack Dalrymple.

- SB 2009, the North Dakota Department of Agriculture budget, included additional funds for the Reserve Veterinary Corps and the Johne’s disease control program.
- SB 2128, introduced by Sen. Bill Bowman, creates a small fund to reimburse producers for serious injury or death of livestock resulting from state-mandated disease testing.
- SB 2341 makes minor changes to the state’s Veterinary Loan Repayment Program by allowing funds to be reallocated if a veterinarian leaves the program.
- SB 2088 allows veterinarians to fill prescriptions issued by other veterinarians.
- SB 2080 allows persons other than veterinarians and pharmacists to dispense prescription veterinary drugs by becoming licensed as a “veterinary retail dispensing facility.”
- SB 2227 relates to deer depredation of stored feed and the North Dakota Game and Fish Department deer-proof hay yard program.

One prominent bill that did not pass, SB 2365, was intended to strengthen the law relating to the inhumane treatment of animals. The bill contained many changes to the existing language, causing concern to stakeholder groups. This law, N.D. Century Code 36-21.1, will be rewritten during the legislative interim to update language and improve clarity. This issue will likely be revisited in a future session.

Another bill that failed, SB 2303, would have added a 10th member to the State Board of Animal Health to represent the feeder industry.

Information on rabies vaccination available

‘Tis the season for rabid skunks and raccoons – several positive cases have been reported this spring.

Rabies vaccination must be administered according to label directions. Any deviation from label directions and from the recommendations in the Compendium of Animal Rabies Control from the National Association of Public Health Veterinarians may be illegal. The complete document, including recommendations for animals that have been exposed to a rabid animal can be found at www.nasphv.org/Documents/RabiesCompendium.pdf.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has extensive and specific information for veterinarians on their website: www.cdc.gov/rabies/specific_groups/veterinarians/index.html.

Notes From the Field

By Justin Maddock

This has been a difficult year to be a man on the road as most of them have been covered by snow all winter, and water all spring. I definitely have learned to plan my routes. So far this year, I have been to every corner of North Dakota from Bowman to Grand Forks, and Williston to Fargo.

I have been busy, unfortunately, with about 14 investigations of inhumane treatment of animals this year. This part of the job is both frustrating and gratifying. I have inspected malnourished cows and horses, as well as abused pets. In several cases, we worked with law enforcement to take action. Animals have been removed, and charges have been filed in some cases. More often, management recommendations are made with follow-ups to ensure that conditions improve. We hope we improve life for the animals we inspect, and that the owners learn that if they fail to care for animals in their keep, there are consequences.

I have inspected sale barns in Williston, Minot, Rugby, Devils Lake, West Fargo, Jamestown, Napoleon, Edgeley, Linton, Bismarck, Mandan, Dickinson and Bowman. This leaves only two more to take a look at this spring. The sale barns have had good news and bad news all year. The good news is the price of cattle and where things look to be headed and the bad news is the weather and its never ending moisture. A lot of the sale barns this spring have had a difficult time getting into pens to keep things clean, but hopefully with warmer weather and drier ground conditions will improve.

Animals are brought into North Dakota at many events, and I try to be present at as many of them as I can. This is to assist these events to ensure that these out of state animals have met North Dakota's importation requirements. There have been around 14 events that I have been present at so far this year. Compliance has been good for the most part, but every now and then people need a little education on requirements for bringing animals into the state legally. Since beginning this position in the fall of 2009, I have definitely seen an increase in awareness of the Board of Animal Health's requirements. Event managers have started to expect that out-of-state animals will be checked and compliance seems to have increased.

I have also spent time on conducting modified live vaccine (MLV) sales inspections, age and source verification auditing for North Dakota Verified Beef, inspecting non-traditional livestock facilities, attending Emergency Services sheltering meetings and assisting with illegal importation investigations.



Justin Maddock

Two programs help repay student loans

Two programs are available to help veterinarians repay student loans.

The North Dakota Veterinary Loan Repayment Program provides up to \$80,000 towards student loan repayment over four years to veterinarians who provide food animal services in rural areas of the state. The State Health Council selects veterinarians, nominated by the State Board of Animal Health, for the program.

Ten of the 12 veterinarians who have received funds since 2008 still provide veterinary service to the community for which they were selected, and several own or co-own their practice.

The federal **Veterinary Medicine Loan Repayment Program** is administered by the National Institute for Food and Agriculture.

Veterinarians can apply to receive up to \$75,000 towards student loan repayment over three years in return for providing food animal services.

Veterinarians who will provide service in designated "veterinary shortage areas" can apply. Applications are reviewed by a national committee. One veterinarian in North Dakota has been selected for this program.

For more information about either program, contact the North Dakota State Board of Animal Health at (701) 328-2655.

Diagnostic lab news

The North Dakota State University Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory now offers PCR testing for anaplasmosis. The price is \$35 per sample, plus a \$7 case accession fee. The only specimen that can be used is an EDTA blood sample, which can be frozen. The test is set up on Wednesdays and Fridays with same-day turnaround. Contact the laboratory for more information.

Justin Maddock is the Board of Animal Health livestock field investigator. Justin is based out of his home near Maddock and travels throughout the state helping enforce animal importation requirements. He also assists with various other duties such as market inspections, non-traditional livestock inspections, inhumane treatment complaints, and many others.

Disease updates

Reportable diseases

North Dakota's reportable disease list is available at www.agdepartment.com/Programs/Livestock/BOAH/ReportableDiseaseList.pdf.

Anthrax

Weather conditions will likely be optimal for anthrax this year. Producers across the state should check their livestock frequently for any unusual death loss. It is not too late to vaccinate animals; immunity from anthrax vaccination is rapid. Producers are urged to discuss vaccination protocols with their local veterinarian.

Brucellosis

All 50 states are now considered free of brucellosis in domestic animals. Because of brucellosis in wildlife populations of the Greater Yellowstone area, North Dakota still requires brucellosis testing prior to importation for animals from certain areas in Montana, Wyoming, and Idaho. Testing is also required for all cattle from Texas. Check www.agdepartment.com/Programs/Livestock/BOAH/BOAH.html or call (701) 328-2655 for more details.

BSE

Ongoing surveillance in North Dakota for bovine spongiform encephalopathy focuses on cattle exhibiting signs of central nervous disorders and other signs that may be associated with BSE, such as emaciation or injury, as well as dead cattle and non-ambulatory animals. Producers should contact Dr. Larry Schuler, the federal area-veterinarian-in-charge at 701-250-4210 if they have an animal(s) that meets surveillance guidelines.

CWD

Since 1998, more than 8,700 farmed deer and elk have been tested for chronic wasting disease in North Dakota. No samples have tested positive for the disease. The North Dakota Game and Fish Department has tested more than 22,000 wild deer and elk. In March of 2010, the first case of CWD in North Dakota wildlife was identified in an adult buck. It was one of more than 3,000 animals sampled as part of the 2009 CWD surveillance. This buck was taken in southwestern Sioux County. In the fall of 2010, another positive sample was identified in a doe from the same area. The Game and Fish Department continues to target this area for increased surveillance.

Rabies

In 2010, 23 cases of rabies were reported in North Dakota. Positive animals included 10 skunks, four cattle, four cats, two dogs, two bats, and a badger.

Equine herpes virus

Equine herpes virus (EHV-1) infection in horses can cause respiratory disease, abortion, neonatal foal death, and/or neurologic disease. The neurologic form of EHV-1 is called equine herpes virus myeloencephalopathy (EHM).

The virus can spread through the air, contaminated equipment, clothing and hands. EHV-1 is not uncommon in the U.S., but recent cases in horses that attended the National Cutting Horse Association Western National Championship, April 29-May 8, in Ogden, UT, have elevated concern about the disease. No horses in North Dakota attended this event, and no horses in the state are known or suspected to be infected at this time. More information, including weekly situation updates, is available at: www.aphis.usda.gov/vs/nahss/equine/ehv/.

Trichomoniasis

Most western states now have regulations regarding trichomoniasis. In most states, regulations only apply to mature bulls; but some states have regulations on young bulls as well as breeding females. Some states require tests for intrastate movement as well as interstate movements. Although there has been discussion among the states on standardizing requirements, no consensus has been reached. North Dakota requires that prior to importation, all non-virgin bulls and any bull over 24 months of age test negative to one PCR trich test or three consecutive weekly cultures. Exemptions may be made for exhibition, seasonal grazing with no comingling and for movement to and from semen collection facilities. There is no exemption for bulls intended for feeding.

Foreign animal disease

Because funding for the Animal Health Monitoring System-Foreign Animal Disease grant cooperative agreement from USDA-APHIS-VS is reduced, the state is less able to help financially with unusual disease investigations. Practitioners are urged to contact either the state veterinarian or the federal area-veterinarian-in-charge if they see anything unusual, especially any vesicular lesions, that looks like a potential foreign animal disease or other reportable disease.

Alert: Tularemia found in ND horse

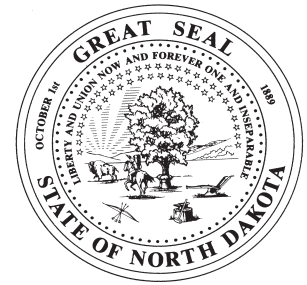
Tularemia has been diagnosed recently in a horse in east-central North Dakota. Rather uncommon in horses, the disease has been found in cats in the western part of the state in past years. tularemia is a mandatory reportable disease in North Dakota.

A vector-borne, zoonotic disease, tularemia can be carried by ticks, horseflies, mosquitoes, sucking lice and biting flies. The bacteria can also be transmitted through scratches and cuts that are exposed to infected animal tissues and by ingestion of infected tissues or contaminated water or inhalation of aerosolized particles. Sheep and cats have historically been a source of infection for humans. The disease is common in wild rodents and rabbits.

Clinical symptoms in horses include fever, dyspnea, incoordination, and depression. Cases in affected horses are associated with extensive tick infestation.

Domestic cats infected with *F. tularensis* may exhibit fever, depression, lymphadenopathy, abscesses, oral or lingual ulceration, gastroenteritis, hepatomegaly, splenomegaly, icterus, anorexia, weight loss, pneumonia, and sepsis.

For more information on tularemia, see www.avma.org/public_health/biosecurity/tularemia_facts.asp#prevention.



Animal Health News

is published by

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Work underway on TB-brucellosis plan

The comment period for USDA's proposed bovine tuberculosis and brucellosis regulatory framework closed July 5. USDA plans to publish the proposal in FY 2011 with the final rule to be issued in FY 2012.

Developed by a Veterinary Services working group, the framework consists of eight interrelated elements that form a single rule for both diseases to ensure consistency, increase flexibility and reduce administrative costs.

The elements are program (state) requirements, zoning, surveillance, affected herd management and epidemiological investigations, indemnity, interstate movement controls, importation requirements and approval procedures related to official tests and laboratories.

Writing of the regulatory text will begin after the comment period. The eradication of both bovine TB and brucellosis is the overall goal of the proposed framework. The current program is acknowledged to be better at managing the diseases at low levels rather than eradicating them, to be punitive on states and the industry, and needing change to account for reduced national funding.

The framework does not detail how the programs will work in practice. Separate performance standards for bovine TB and brucellosis will be established.

To read the draft framework, see www.aphis.usda.gov/animal_health/tb_bruc/downloads/tb_bruc_framework.pdf.

To review submitted comments, see www.regulations.gov/#!/docketDetail;D=APHIS-2011-0044.

Program updates

Equine herpesvirus

Because of concerns about equine herpesvirus (EHV-1), a certificate of veterinary inspection is now required for all horses entering North Dakota for any length of time.

The exemption for horses entering the state for less than seven days has been suspended.

Official identification

Removing official identification from livestock is a violation of federal law. Any incident of persons removing USDA or Canadian ear tags (including bar code and RFID tags), should be reported to Dr. Larry Schuler, the federal area-veterinarian-in-charge, or Dr. Susan Keller, the state veterinarian.

Johne's disease

Thanks to the efforts of North Dakota's beef and dairy industry groups during the past two legislative sessions, funding is available for testing assistance through the Voluntary Bovine Johne's Disease Control Program.

Testing assistance reimbursement has been relatively consistent for the last 18 to 20 months. The reimbursement rate is \$150 for completing the risk assessment. An agreement form must be completed each year along with the risk assessment. The producer must have a W-9 form with complete name and address on file with the office.

Paperwork has not been completed for a considerable number of herds that have been tested. Producers who complete the testing will not be reimbursed until their veterinarians submit the required paperwork.

Fecal pooled cultures are reimbursed at \$40 per pool. Veterinarians should send in individual samples; the lab will do the pooling in groups of five. The lab will split any positive pools to determine which animal from the pool is positive. When a pool is positive, the lab charges an additional \$15 per sample, or \$75 per positive pool, which is not reimbursed. If fecal samples are sent in for testing and pooling is not desired, "individual tests" should be stated on the test charts. The lab will, by default, pool samples unless otherwise specified. When individual fecal polymerase chain reaction (PCR) tests are run for either confirmation of an ELISA or as a primary test, testing is reimbursed at \$15 per sample. Again, confirmation testing of individual animals from positive pools is not eligible for reimbursement.

Serum and milk ELISA tests are reimbursed at \$3.50 per sample. Milk samples must be collected by a third party verifier, such as a veterinarian or a DHIA official tester.

Animal Health News

Questions regarding the Johne's disease program should be directed to Dr. Jesse Vollmer at (701) 328-2612 or Kimberly Spear at (701) 328-2350.

Scrapie

The most recent scrapie flock investigation in North Dakota was completed in August 2007, and the state is now being asked to increase on-farm and market surveillance. Limited funds are available through March 31, 2014 to compensate producers submitting samples. Producers with sheep that may qualify should contact Dr. Beth Carlson at (701) 328-2655.

Limited cooperative agreement funds are also available for genotyping. Producers and/or veterinarians who are interested in participating should contact Dr. Beth Carlson at (701) 328-2655 for more information and to obtain approval and the appropriate forms. In the past, several producers have not been paid or had their payments delayed because the veterinarian did not use the appropriate forms or did not fill the forms out correctly. The veterinarian must use a VS form 5-29 (available from federal or state offices), and sheep must be identified using a scrapie tag.

Humane complaints

The BOAH continues to respond to complaints of inhumane treatment of animals. All complaints received are investigated, either by a local law enforcement official, staff veterinarian, or contracted accredited veterinarian.

Supplies available

The following supplies are obtained from the state office:

- Brucellosis vaccination tags
- Official USDA silver tags
- North Dakota health certificate books

The following supplies are obtained from the USDA-APHIS Veterinary Service office:

- Scrapie tags
- Tuberculin
- EIA forms
- TB and brucellosis test charts
- Brucellosis vaccination certificates
- Small animal health certificates



Minot shelter established for evacuated pets

Responding to the mandatory evacuations in Minot caused by the flooding of the Souris River, the Souris Valley Humane Society, assisted by volunteers, extension personnel and local veterinarians, are maintaining an emergency pet shelter at the North Dakota State University North Central Research Extension Center, south of the city. Noah's Wish, a national sheltering group, sent a volunteer to assist the shelter manager. As of July 1, more than 500 pets were being cared for at the emergency shelter.

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