

Meeting Minutes: Quarterly Board Meeting

Date: December 5, 2018
Location: University of Minnesota Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory
1333 Gortner Avenue, St. Paul, Minnesota 55108

Attendance

BOARD MEMBERS

Dean Compart, Producer
Matt Anderson, Veterinarian
Graham Brayshaw, Veterinarian
Peter Ripka, Producer
Erica Sawatzke, Producer

CONSULTANTS TO THE BOARD

Joni Scheftel, Minnesota Department of Health
Jerry Torrison, Director, University of Minnesota Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory
Andrea Vaubel, Deputy Commissioner, Minnesota Department of Agriculture

GUESTS

Luke Barthold, Swine Producer
Michelle Carstensen, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources
Connie Gebhart, University of Minnesota Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory
Gene Hugoson, Minnesota AgriGrowth
David Johnson, Swine Producer
Stephanie Johnson, Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists (CSTE) Fellow
Gustavo Lopez, University of Minnesota Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory
Daryn McBeth, Lobbyist, Minnesota Pet Breeders Association
Michelle Medina, Minnesota Farmers Union
David Preisler, Minnesota Pork Producers Association
Mike Starkey, Minnesota Department of Agriculture

STAFF

Beth Thompson
Linda Glaser
Dale Lauer
Shauna Voss
Greg Suskovic
Stacey Schwabenlander
Courtney Wheeler
Mackenzie Reberg
Annie Balghiti
Morgan Grelson
Erin Crider

Approval of agenda and September 19 minutes

Dean Compart called the meeting to order, and he asked for any changes to agenda. Courtney Wheeler requested her presentation on Garbage Feeding be moved up to coincide with the arrival of Luke Barthold and David Johnson, who will be assisting with the discussion. Mr. Compart agreed to change the agenda and asked for a motion to approve it with the change. Graham Brayshaw made the motion, and Matt Anderson seconded. A vote was taken, with all present voting aye.

Mr. Compart asked if there were any changes or corrections to the minutes from the September 19, 2018, meeting. Hearing none, he asked for a motion to approve the minutes. Peter Ripka made a motion, and Graham Brayshaw seconded, with all voting aye.

Board of Animal Health Update

Beth Thompson began by stating that Stephan Schaeffbauer is not present at today's meeting due to the National Day of Mourning declared by President Trump. All federal offices are closed.

The Board is active in planning and preparations for African Swine Fever (ASF). Last week, the Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA), University of Minnesota, pork producers, veterinarians, the Pork Producers Council, and Dr. Dave Wright participated in a day-long webinar on preparing for ASF. This was the first in a series of three ASF webinars: the next will be in late January or early February in Des Moines, Iowa, and the third will be in Minnesota in April.

Dr. Thompson stated the Board and MDA will respond if ASF is ever found in Minnesota, but she wants to make sure the Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory, swine veterinarians and producers are properly prepared to recognize the disease right away. Dr. Torrison mentioned that the National Animal Health Laboratory Network (NAHLN) is working on an ASF active surveillance program. The main concern is that ASF would not be detected immediately because its symptoms are similar to other diseases.

Dr. Thompson mentioned upcoming staff retirements. Dr. Mike Curley, a Board District Veterinarian, will be retiring soon. Dr. John Piehl, a USDA veterinarian, retired in late November.

The 2018 United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) Meeting was held in October. This group brings together state animal health officials, stakeholder groups, and related state agencies, such as MDA. Much of what comes out of this meeting is resolutions that are adopted by USDA and other government agencies. Resolutions discussed this year include veterinary public practice, awareness and promotion; ASF, Classical Swine Fever, and Pseudorabies (testing and surveillance); the role of the prion protein gene in chronic wasting disease (CWD); strain evaluation; TB testing for Cervidae; and the need for a field trial to evaluate ultra-high frequency radio frequency identification cattle back tags. Minnesota is in the USAHA North Central region, which will hold their meeting in Iowa this spring.

USDA Update

Dr. Thompson shared notes on the USDA provided by Dr. Schaeffbauer. The Animal Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) Veterinary Services (VS) reformation was implemented in mid-October, and VS has not experienced any reduction in staff or relocations during the transition. The reformation took place to align resources to improve customer service, effectiveness and efficiency. Overall stakeholders have not recognized the change.

Dr. Thompson stated the Seneca Valley Virus (SVV) Testing Pilot is taking place in response to an expanded case load in swine vesicular foreign animal disease investigations at processing plants. VS piloted a modified SVV testing algorithm

with the California NAHLN lab system. In this protocol, if the real-time PCR assay results for SVV and Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) are positive for SVV but negative for FMD, the Foreign Animal Disease Diagnostic Laboratory (FADDL) will not do further testing. If samples are negative for both diseases, FADDL will run the full diagnostic algorithm on the duplicate samples they receive. Dr. Torrison reiterated this pilot is for production plant investigations only; it is not for use by field veterinarians.

Veterinary Services has had several staffing changes. In November, Dr. Robyn Corcoran began work as the Emergency Coordinator for Minnesota and Iowa. Dr. Corcoran previously served as a field veterinarian with the USDA. Two other field veterinarians are entering retirement: Dr. John Piehl retired on November 30, and Dr. Leon Boehland will be retiring on December 31. They plan to fill these vacancies, are asking for priority hiring for one new Veterinary Medical Officer (VMO) position, and will be offering another VMO position to a Saul T. Wilson Scholarship recipient. This scholarship is awarded to recipients with a pledge to serve two to three years with the USDA after graduation.

Legislative Update

Andrea Vaubel, Deputy Commissioner with the Minnesota Department of Agriculture, gave an update on legislative activities. Ms. Vaubel stated Governor-Elect Tim Walz will be sworn in on January 7, and MDA is preparing materials to help provide a seamless transition. The transition team visited MDA last week to learn about the agency culture, programs and budget. They are doing the same with all state agencies. This information will help the new administration prepare the state budget, which they must present by February 19. Governor Dayton has prepared a bare-bones budget as a starting point for the Walz administration. In that budget, MDA has requested to have emergency preparedness funding replenished, which also includes funding for Board emergency preparedness activities. MDA and the Board will know soon if all of the requests will be funded.

There are six positions within MDA that are political appointments: Commissioner, Deputy Commissioner, two Assistant Commissioners, the Director of Government Affairs, and the Commissioner's Assistant. Due to Commissioner Dave Frederickson's upcoming retirement, MDA will have a new commissioner. Anyone can apply for these positions. The administration is going through the interview process for commissioners now, and the other positions will be appointed after that.

MDA has been increasing their focus on emergency preparedness. They started the Emerging Issues Committee, which includes Mike Starkey and industry representatives. They have also hired three new employees to work with Mr. Starkey on emergency preparedness and response activities.

2018 H5N2 LPAI Response

Dale Lauer provided an overview of the Board's ongoing response to the H5N2 Low Pathogenic Avian Influenza (LPAI) introductions this fall. He informed the Board that H5N2 LPAI of North American wild bird lineage was detected on eight Minnesota commercial turkey premises in Kandiyohi (four premises) and Stearns (4 premises) counties. Five premises raise toms; three premises raise hens. Dr. Lauer explained that this H5N2 virus type is completely different from the H5N2 Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) outbreak of 2015, so the disease response is completely different. The Board is using the USDA LPAI Guidance Documents and Minnesota's Initial State Response and Containment Plan (ISRCP) to respond to this event.

Dr. Lauer explained the state and federal response differences to HPAI and LPAI. HPAI is considered a foreign animal disease with a combined federal and state response. The disease can move very quickly, results in 100 percent mortality and requires immediate depopulation. Challenges with this type of response include the immediate mobilization of depopulation equipment, adequate resources to support the depopulation activities, and people who are properly

trained. For LPAI, it is a state response with federal support. States use their ISRCP as their response plan. Birds with LPAI may or may not show clinical signs. Controlled marketing (CM) or immediate depopulation will be the action taken, depending on the state's ISRCP. As successfully carried out with many flocks in the past, Minnesota's ISRCP is to allow for CM of infected flocks. CM includes placing the infected flocks under quarantine, testing and monitoring them for any clinical signs, and once the flock tests negative, sending the flock to market to be processed.

Dr. Lauer explained how quickly the Board responded to the first H5N2 detection.

- **October 19 (Friday):** Enhanced surveillance detected exposure to an H5 influenza virus on a Kandiyohi County commercial turkey premises. Testing was conducted at the Minnesota Poultry Testing Laboratory (MPTL), and arrangements were made to courier the samples to the National Veterinary Services Laboratory (NVSL) for confirmation.
- **October 20:** Samples were received and tested at the NVSL, where the virus was determined to be H5N2 LPAI North American wild bird lineage. The Board notified the poultry industry and the Emergency Disease Management Committee (EDMC) via email and text Disease Alert.
- **October 21:** The Board established an Incident Command Post (ICP) at the MPTL.
- **October 30:** A Stearns County premises detected H5N2 LPAI during routine pre-market testing.

The additional LPAI infected premises in both Kandiyohi and Stearns Counties were identified through Control Area Surveillance, which is part of the state's ISRCP protocol. All poultry premises within 10 kilometers of the infected premises were tested for LPAI. All other flocks in the control area tested negative.

Dr. Lauer said the response efforts went very smoothly. Having the response team and testing capabilities in the same location at the MPTL was crucial to the timely response. To reach out and inform poultry producers and the public, the Board sent out press releases announcing the first H5N2 LPAI cases in Kandiyohi and Stearns counties and then created a web page so information could be updated quickly and made available in one place.

Dr. Lauer explained the Controlled Marketing (CM) Movement process and stated the Board strives to do the appropriate testing throughout the CM process to make sure the state is following the State's ISRCP and to prevent spread of the virus while flocks are on site. In controlled marketing, all flocks on the premises must test negative before the birds are moved to slaughter. The route to slaughter must avoid other commercial poultry operations, and all trucks, trailers and load-out equipment must be cleaned and disinfected before returning to routine work. Additional down time (48 hours) is also required before entering other poultry premises or facilities. Poultry moved for CM are not eligible for indemnity, but any costs related to cleaning and disinfection of premises, equipment, and materials that came into contact with poultry moved for CM will be eligible. This type of reimbursement by the federal government is termed compensation.

As part of additional activities to ensure that the virus is eliminated from the premises, each barn that contained infected birds must also go through a cleaning and disinfecting process, now referred to as Virus Elimination (VE). The process involves heating the barn for three consecutive days; cleaning feeders, waterers and side wall surfaces; removing litter to an approved site and leaving the barn fallow for 14 days. After VE activities are complete, Board employees will collect environmental samples.

As of this meeting, the first Kandiyohi County farm and the first two Stearns County facilities were controlled marketed in November; the second Kandiyohi and remaining Stearns County premises are scheduled to control market December 6 to 7. The last two Kandiyohi County farms should be controlled marketed shortly after that. Premises that have been controlled marketed are completing their VE activities according to their unique flock plans.

Dr. Lauer mentioned several strengths of the response efforts. Engaging the industry immediately was key to the response success. The Board held conference calls with the industry, processors, MDH, and USDA three times weekly, and continued to collaborate with the USDA throughout the response. The Disease Alerts were important in getting information out as quickly as possible. Having both testing capabilities and the response team at the MPTL was very valuable in making the response a success.

The response effort revealed the need to update the state's ISRCP, which was last updated in 2012. Other response challenges included the time of the year (close to Thanksgiving), the close proximity and size of the infected premises, and the fact that some premises had flocks of multiple ages. The Board had to consider how to handle that challenge and stay within the state's ISRCP.

Dr. Lauer mentioned several steps the Board will be taking in response to this LPAI outbreak. Board staff will be working with the EDMC on updating Minnesota's ISRCP in 2019, considering biosecurity corrective actions at the infected premises, and scheduling a H5N2 LPAI Hot Wash with all the case managers, the Incident Management Team and Dr. Thompson in January 2019, as requested by Dr. Thompson.

College of Veterinary Medicine Update

Jerry Torrison gave an update on the University of Minnesota, College of Veterinary Medicine. The proposal to create a regional veterinary program agreement between South Dakota State University (SDSU) and the University of Minnesota is moving forward, pending approval from the boards of regents of both schools and building updates at SDSU. The program would provide spots for 20 veterinary students interested in food animal veterinary care. Their first two years of training would be at SDSU in Brookings, and the last two years would take place in St. Paul. The earliest students might enroll at SDSU would be fall 2021.

The Minnesota Rural Veterinarian Loan Repayment Program is accepting applications from College of Veterinary Medicine graduates who will be working in underserved rural areas. This program provides up to \$15,000 annually for five years for graduates who serve five years in a designated rural area and are involved in food animal care at least 50 percent of the time.

Dr. Torrison said the College of Veterinary Medicine is developing informational materials on African Swine Fever (ASF) to help the region's industry learn about the disease, its spread in China and Europe, and disease prevention strategies. Up-to-date ASF information is also posted on the College of Veterinary Medicine African Swine Fever web page (<https://www.vetmed.umn.edu/centers-programs/swine-program/research-sdec/african-swine-fever>) and the Center for Health and Food Safety ASFWatch web page (<https://www.cahfs.umn.edu/services-tools/cahfs-emerging-issues>).

The University of Minnesota is considering a strategic plan for the St. Paul Campus facilities. Part of that plan is to replace the Veterinary Services building in the future. The final plan is expected to be released later this month.

Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory Update

Dr. Torrison also provided an update on the Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory (VDL). There is a movement to create an active ASF surveillance program at the VDL, and they are working with the National Animal Health Laboratory Network (NAHLN) to increase their ASF testing capabilities. In addition to whole blood, the VDL can now test tonsil samples, which has been very helpful in detecting Classical Swine Fever (CSF). They are working on validating other sample types, including lymph nodes, where ASF can be concentrated.

Dr. Torrison attended the Minneapolis-St. Paul (MSP) Airport Pest Risk Committee Meeting on September 14. This group included U.S. Customs and Border Patrol (CBP), the Center for Disease Control, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and USDA

APHIS Veterinary Services. The biggest concern regarding ASF transmission is the lack of container inspection at major ports of entry. Sometimes containers make it to the Midwest without being opened and inspected. Another concern is lack of staffing to do inspections during busy travel times.

Dr. Torrison said the Immunohistochemistry (IHC) reagent the VDL wanted to use for chronic wasting disease (CWD) and scrapie testing did not pass NVSL testing due to non-specific staining. The VDL's supply of existing reagents ran out this week. They are working with the NVSL and other labs to find a workaround.

A request to increase VDL funding is incorporated into the University of Minnesota's funding request for the upcoming legislative session. They are hopeful to receive an increase to keep operating with their current staff and be able to add more in the future.

Commercial Dog and Cat Breeder Program Update

Courtney Wheeler gave an update on the Licensed Commercial Dog and Cat Breeder Program. Dr. Wheeler explained the definition of a licensed commercial breeder and stated that at this time, there are 128 licensed commercial dog and cat breeders, and four applications are in process. Licensed commercial breeders must pass a yearly inspection, which looks at 26 points of inspection. If they fail in one area, they fail the inspection. The program has developed a Commercial Dog and Cat Breeder Handbook, which is a reference guide containing all licensure requirements and legal definitions.

Dr. Wheeler said the Board is working on developing standards for the Commercial Breeder Excellence Program, which will recognize breeders who exceed the Commercial Breeder Program requirements. A Breeder Excellence Advisory Task Force, made up of commercial breeders, veterinarians and Board staff, has met three times to discuss and create a rough draft of program requirements, which will be released in February.

Dean Compart asked how the commercial breeders are responding to the inspections and the program. Dr. Wheeler said some feel the program is beneficial, while others feel it is a detriment to their business. She hopes the Breeder Excellence Program will boost confidence in the program.

Graham Brayshaw asked about the common issues found during inspections. Dr. Wheeler stated the most common issues are lack of veterinary protocol and health certificates. Dr. Thompson asked if the veterinary protocol failures were mostly due to not having a vet in the area or not having a working relationship with a veterinarian. Dr. Wheeler said it is a mix of both reasons, and some of the failures are because the existing protocols do not meet expectations.

Dean Compart asked if animal rescues fall under either the licensed breeder or kennel programs. Dr. Wheeler said that most of them do not fall under the Board's kennel program because they solely use foster homes. She stated there is a group of veterinarians working with the Minnesota Veterinary Medical Association to develop guidelines for rescue organizations. They also have approached the Board about legislation that would incorporate rescues into the kennel program, but funding and staffing issues would have to be addressed, as there are may be as many as 900 rescue groups in Minnesota.

Antimicrobial Resistance Projects

Dr. Torrison introduced Connie Gebhart, who discussed two of the antimicrobial resistance (AMR) projects in progress at the University of Minnesota Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory. These projects will aid in determining the population and distribution of resistant bacteria in the U.S.

The USDA NAHLN AMR Monitoring Project, which began in January 2018, involves 19 American Association of Veterinary Laboratory Diagnostician (AAVLD) -approved laboratories. The goal is to develop a standardized protocol and a centralized system for collecting and reporting diagnostic data to quickly recognize trends of AMR phenotypes, new profiles, and antibiotic effectiveness over time. The pilot selected four pathogens, and each participating lab submits 3-4 isolates and minimum inhibitory concentration (MIC) data per pathogen per month to the USDA. Isolates are archived for further testing, and data will be used to track trends and create an annual report for stakeholders. The priority is for the report to include antibiotics identified as important, highly important and critically important for human medicine as well as for animal health.

The FDA Vet-Laboratory Investigation and Response Network (Vet-LIRN) Program, begun in January 2017, involves 21 AAVLD-approved laboratories. The goal is to conduct surveillance of AMR and whole genome sequencing (WGS) of National Antimicrobial Resistance Network (NARMS) pathogens. The project began analyzing only four specific isolates, but this July, it expanded to include 12 “other” isolates (of any type or species) from each participating lab. The FDA then selects certain isolates for WGS, and four of the labs, including the VDL, perform WGS. The remaining isolates are archived for future testing.

Dr. Gebhart mentioned that the iSeq WGS Project emerged from the FDA project, with the goal of increasing the number of network labs with sequencing capabilities in order to facilitate more efficient outbreak investigations. Ten VDLs have acquired Illumina iSeq sequencers, are collaborating on developing standardized sequencing protocols, and are learning how to do the sequencing. Once the labs are trained, they plan to work together to do WGS on the archived isolates from the FDA project.

Garbage Feeding Discussion

Courtney Wheeler introduced Luke Barthold and David Johnson, swine producers and permitted garbage feeders, who would be participating in the discussion and answering questions. Dr. Wheeler explained the classes of garbage feeding.

- **Class A:** Garbage feeding, which is feeding food waste containing meat or that has been in contact with meat. Garbage must be cooked to 212 degrees for at least 30 minutes by direct fire or steam cooking equipment. Facilities are inspected monthly. The Board also does quarterly verifications to make sure cooking temperatures meet 212 degrees for at least 30 minutes.
- **Class B:** Exempt materials, which is feeding non-meat food waste such as bakery items, cereals and candy. Exempt materials do not have to be cooked. The Board inspects them biannually.

Dr. Wheeler covered requirements for livestock, excess food waste, cleaning, carcass disposal, and recordkeeping. Garbage feeding facilities currently are inspected by USDA field staff.

Dr. Wheeler opened up the discussion for questions. Questions answers are summarized below.

- **Do permitted garbage feeding facilities go through the garbage cooking process every day?** Mr. Barthold said yes, the garbage is cooked in the truck every day, and most of it is consumed the same day.
- **Do you supplement the animals with other food, or is the garbage their sole diet?** Garbage feed is mostly what they receive.
- **Do you travel a route through the Twin Cities every day and to what places? How much time does this take?** Yes, every day their drivers go to the same places, stopping by restaurants, grocery stores, hospitals, and schools. Some trucks go to 15-20 different places. The routes can take up to six hours to complete.
- **What is the feeding surface for the animals?** They eat off of a concrete apron, which is scraped at least weekly to clean it. If it rains or snows, it is scraped right away.

- **How do you deal with metal and glass in the garbage?** Garbage from food processing plants and grocery stores is not much of a concern, but from other locations, they collect the garbage in 32 gallon containers so they can more closely monitor and remove those materials.
- **Garbage feeding producers have to have a permit. Do restaurants supplying the garbage have to be permitted?** Some cities require restaurants to be permitted, but that is rare. Some restaurants have contracts with permitted garbage feeders.
- **Are there producers that try garbage feeding and do not follow the proper procedures?** No. All of the producers who are permitted garbage feeders have been doing it for years, know each other, and want everyone to do things right.

African swine fever in Russia

Gustavo Lopez gave an overview of his experiences working at an ASF-infected commercial processing plant during the 2014 African Swine Fever (ASF) outbreak. Dr. Lopez stated that ASF is a very complex, highly resistant virus that can last for long periods of time in fresh, smoked and frozen meat. It is highly contagious and has an incubation period of up to 19 days, during which the virus can be shed. No vaccine is available.

The first 2014 case in Russia took place at a finisher site for a fully integrated large pork producer. The site had 16 rooms, each of which could hold up to 2000 pigs. On the first day (Day 0), clinical signs, including fever, purple ears and mild scouring, were visible in only a few animals. These animals recovered. On Day 3, three percent mortality was reported in more pens. Animal movement was halted and samples were taken for testing. On Day 6, test results came back ASF negative. On Day 7, gilts were sent from another room (no clinical signs present) to the gilt development unit (GDU). By Day 10, clinical signs had worsened and expanded to more pens in the affected room, and the GDU reported similar symptoms. On Day 11, a second diagnostic investigation began, and PCR tests revealed ASF at both locations, after which quarantine measures began.

Dr. Lopez said clinical signs were not always present in the pigs. He could walk into the affected room, and most of the animals looked fine. As he walked farther into the room, the animals were visibly sick, and farther on, he found different clinical signs and high mortality in the pigs. He did necropsies, and he could see hemorrhagic spots but nothing that clearly indicated ASF. Their digestive systems did not show clinical signs.

The quarantine zone was set up five kilometers around both sites. Movement was forbidden, and movement of people vehicles was restricted. All pigs were euthanized, and all carcasses were buried and burned. There were exhaustive washing and disinfection protocols. The facilities were required to have no pigs on the farm for a year, and have bioassays for 60 days.

The quarantine was easy to enforce, as there are not many roads to control. However, digging holes around the farm for burial required a lot of labor and equipment. It took five weeks to euthanize all of the animals, as the farm was not prepared with a euthanasia method. The affected room closed with only 15 percent mortality, and only four out of the 16 rooms tested positive for ASF before depopulation. The sow farm and nursery on the multiplier site remained ASF negative.

As a result of this outbreak, the company recognized the need for a reliable diagnostic laboratory, so they built their own lab to test reliably and more often, including twice weekly testing as active surveillance. They also realized the need for strong biosecurity, including a transport transfer station on all farms, disinfection barriers and shower in/shower out facilities. They also started looking at daily updated ASF outbreak maps and spraying for ticks in farm areas.

Dr. Lopez stated that active surveillance is imperative to preventing an ASF outbreak; clinical signs are not always present at the time of infection. Strict biosecurity measures need to be in place. In Russia, people most likely brought the virus into the farm.

DNR Chronic Wasting Disease surveillance

Michelle Carstensen provided an overview of the DNR's chronic wasting disease (CWD) surveillance during the fall. The DNR set up four surveillance zones. The North-Central and Central Zones are located around the CWD-positive farms in Crow Wing and Meeker Counties, respectively. None of the samples collected were CWD positive. Dr. Carstensen said this was the second of three years of surveillance planned in these areas, though they will be re-evaluating the plan for the North-Central zone based on the recent positive cases found on the Crow Wing County farm.

The DNR also collected samples in the Southeast area of the state during opening weekend of firearms season in 3A and 3B. They collected just under 3,000 samples, and two positives were found, with 12 results still pending. Finally, they performed mandatory testing of all deer over one year old in Area 603, and seven positive deer were found, with one suspect case pending. Based on the location of the CWD-positive female deer, who generally are not migratory, the core area of infection appears to remain anchored between Preston and Lanesboro.

The DNR is planning several activities to reduce the deer population and the number of CWD-infected animals in this area. They will be conducting a special late hunt December 21 through 23 and December 28 through 30. In January, they will work with the USDA to start targeted culling in the primary core area, Forestville State Park, and the Bucksnot area. They will also offer landowner shooting permits.

Dr. Carstensen also reviewed additional response activities. The DNR's updated CWD Management Plan has been approved by division leadership, and after final edits are made, it will be released later this month. The DNR is working to improve support for CWD response activities in the Southeast and Area 603. They are holding a public meeting in Preston on December 18 to update them on CWD findings and the upcoming special hunt and targeted culling. They have also mailed out a survey to area hunters and landowners to assess their support of CWD management actions.

Farmed Cervidae Program update

Mackenzie Reberg provided an update on the farmed Cervidae CWD response and program activities. Seven more positive animals were detected on the Crow Wing County farm where CWD was detected in late 2016. The herd has been under quarantine since the initial two CWD-positives were detected. No additional positive cases were found until 2018. The Board is actively responding to these new cases and is working with the USDA Area office staff to summarize this recent herd history for a request to USDA for indemnity for this herd. , Approval of indemnity must wait until a new federal budget is passed.

Based on the new CWD cases found in wild deer in southeastern Minnesota, the Board is expanding its CWD Endemic Area, which will include six additional farmed Cervidae herds, bringing the total number of endemic area farms to 12. Farms in the endemic area are subject to animal and carcass movement restrictions, unless they are double fenced (or become double fenced within 180 days), or have prevented commingling of wild and farmed Cervidae for at least 36 months. The Board will notify the six herd owners after hunting season ends.

The DNR and the Board have had three meetings to draft a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) meant to clarify relationships and interagency cooperation regarding the Minnesota farmed Cervidae statutes. They have specifically discussed data sharing, farmed cervid escape response, identification of CWD-positive farmed and wild cervids and the

response, CWD surveillance and testing, and general communications. The MOU is nearly complete; the DNR and the Board will review it once more before finalizing it.

Linda Glaser stated the Board continues to work on the Office of the Legislative Auditor's (OLA) recommendations laid out in their program audit. The OLA requested an update on the Board's progress in November, and the Board outlined what it has done to meet the recommendations, as well as timelines for completion. Dr. Glaser will send this update to the Board members for review.

Next meeting and adjourn

The next meeting of the Board of Animal Health will be held on Wednesday, February 20, 2019, starting at 9:30 a.m., location to be determined.

Dean Compart stated he and Peter Ripka have reapplied for membership on the Board, which lasts three years. Once Tim Walz is sworn in as governor, he will appoint people to these two Board positions.

Mr. Compart asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Matt Anderson made the motion, and Erica Sawatzke seconded, with all present voting aye.

Respectfully Submitted,

Beth Thompson
State Veterinarian
Executive Director