Minutes of the Quarterly Meeting of the Board of Animal Health

Wednesday, September 3, 2014

A quarterly meeting of the Minnesota Board of Animal Health was held at 9:30 a.m. on Wednesday, September 3, 2014 at Cragun's Resort in Brainerd, Minnesota. The following people were present:

Board Members

Steve Brake, Producer
Holly Neaton, Veterinarian
Paul Hanowski, Producer
Dean Compart, Producer
Matt Anderson, Veterinarian

Consultants to the Board

Jim Collins, Director, University of Minnesota Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory
Trevor Ames, Dean, University of Minnesota College of Veterinary Medicine

Guests

Steve Just, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Veterinary Services
Dave Preisler, Minnesota Pork Board
Carrie Ruud, Minnesota Senator, District 10
Elaine Hanson, Minnesota Pet Breeders Association
Julie Gerdes, Animal Safety League

Staff Members

William Hartmann, Executive Director
Paul Anderson, Assistant Director
Dale Lauer, Assistant Director
Beth Thompson, Assistant Director
Linda Glaser, Senior Veterinarian
Stacey Schwabenlander, Senior Veterinarian
Shauna Voss, Senior Veterinarian
Bethany Hahn, Communications Director
Ray Scheierl, Information Technology Director
Don Myren, Agricultural Advisor

Approval of Minutes of the Quarterly Meeting of the Board of Animal Health held on Wednesday, April 16, 2014

A motion was made by Dean Compart and seconded by Paul Hanowski, with all present voting aye to approve the minutes of the Wednesday, April 16, 2014 meeting.

Board of Animal Health

Dr. Bill Hartmann gave an overview of the Board's activities since the last board meeting. The legislative session ended and the commercial dog and cat breeder bill passed. The new statutes provide $310,000 for the Board in the first year to administer the program, with continual funding thereafter. This year we are required to register facilities meeting the definition of a commercial dog or cat breeder. Beginning July 1, 2015, we have to inspect and license each facility.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) secretary announced that porcine epidemic diarrhea virus (PEDv) and other swine enteric coronavirus diseases (SECD) are reportable diseases. The federal order also mandates producers and veterinarians to develop herd management plans for infected herds. Now that SECD is reportable, the USDA was able to free up emergency funds that will be used for research and for fee-basis agreements with participating veterinarians, producers, truck washes and other vendors.

The Board continues to enhance its ability to trace animals. We've been using ear tags to track the movement of animals, storing most of the data electronically. The USDA has given us test exercises to check our ability to trace animal IDs and we have done a good job. We also continually work on developing emergency plans. Currently, Dr. Glaser is involved in creating a safe milk supply plan. If foot-and-mouth disease was introduced in Minnesota, we would need a way to safely move milk and other products out of a disease control zone. The safe food supply plans address different facets of moving agricultural products out of areas affected by a foreign animal disease.

College of Veterinary Medicine

Dr. Trevor Ames reported that the University of Minnesota (U of M), College of Veterinary Medicine (CVM) is back in full swing. Additionally, the Leman Swine Conference is coming up later in September. About 800 attendees are expected to attend the event which is held at the St. Paul River Centre.

The U of M receives flat funding from the legislature, but within the university there is a process of funding reallocation. About two percent of the CVM's budget is put at risk. This year the U of M Board of Regents approved that the reallocation dollars would be used to freeze the cost of tuition for first, second and third-year students and reduce the senior year tuition by eight percent.

Minnesota's Discovery, Research and Inno Vation Economy (MnDRIVE) is a partnership between the U of M and the State of Minnesota. Nine of the 17 projects that were awarded funding through MnDRIVE involve the CVM. Projects include two infectious disease case studies – porcine reproductive and respiratory syndrome (PRRS) and viral hemorrhagic septicemia – which will serve as prototypes. Other diseases and species will eventually be included.

In the U of M's bonding request this year, there will be a request for a veterinary isolation facility. There needs to be a safe place to do research and study contagious diseases so that we can figure out a way to contain

those diseases. The emergence of PEDv is a real-life example of why the CVM could use updated facilities. Representative Rod Hamilton has been very supportive in our endeavor to secure funding for this purpose.

Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory

Dr. Jim Collins spoke about new technology at the U of M Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory (VDL). The VDL was able to install new equipment needed for sequencing. The sequencer is up and operational in the Cargill building on the St. Paul campus. It allows the VDL to sequence viruses and bacteria very quickly and enables a more rapid response. The VDL is recruiting a new molecular diagnostician to help analyze the information received through the sequencer. A food animal pathologist is also needed on the bovine and swine side. Half of the position has been filled by an individual who will begin on October 1.

Canine brucellosis (brucella canis) is a growing problem in the companion animal area. Thanks to new funding coming in to the VDL, the PCR test for canine brucellosis is close to being ready to launch. This test is very sensitive and good at identifying infectious organisms. The new telepathology technology that is in use at the laboratory is another great addition to the St. Paul campus. It enables the laboratory to do pathology remotely from anywhere in the world while bringing the cost down.

U.S. Department of Agriculture

Dr. Steve Just reported that Dr. Steve Halstead has been hired as the new District 3 Director. Dr. Halstead was the state veterinarian in Michigan for nine years. He also has a background with the Michigan Department of Natural Resources. His experience gives the USDA a good connection with the other states in the district. Halstead will be attending our state/federal work conference in St. Cloud this month.

The USDA oversaw the depopulation of the North Oaks red deer herd. One hundred and forty animals were euthanized and samples were collected for chronic wasting disease testing. All samples have tested negative. The operation ran smoothly and took less than two days to complete.

Swine Enteric Coronavirus Disease

Dr. Beth Thompson provided an update on swine enteric coronavirus disease (SECD) and reporting of the disease in Minnesota. SECD includes PEDv and deltacorona virus. Porcine epidemic diarrhea virus was first diagnosed in the U.S. over a year ago. It is a transboundary disease, meaning it’s a disease we had not seen before. However, it is not considered a foreign animal disease because there haven’t been trade implications as a result of infection. In sow farms, the death rate in baby pigs approaches 100 percent. As the pigs get older the mortality declines but the animals do show signs of illness. The growth rate is affected and it could set producers back two to three weeks. Around eight million pigs in the US have been lost to SECD in the first year since the introduction of these diseases.

In early June of this year, the federal government put a federal order in place. The federal order requires veterinarians and producers to report presumptive-positive or test-positve cases of PEDv to either the Board or the USDA. Once a case is reported, additional actions need to be taken by the producer/veterinarian, and through the state and USDA. The USDA provides a summary of cases each week. At the end of the week on August 28, 231 premises affecting 18 states were identified with SECD.

Dean Compart spoke about how PEDv has affected his herd, including a sow farm. Their operations saw tremendous death loss once infected with the virus. Thousands of pigs were lost that would've been marketed this summer. They tried feeding back in addition to thoroughly cleaning and disinfecting the barns. Those practices helped but PEDv was still a huge problem for them. Once they started vaccinating using the Harris vaccine, they started to see a big change. This is a vaccine that needs to see the actual virus in order to be effective. If the pigs have never seen PEDv, the vaccine is not effective. Zoetis also just received approval for a conditional use license.

In addition to dealing with SECD, there is a "new" strain of PRRSv that has been diagnosed in southwestern Minnesota. This is a strain that has been seen in North Carolina where mortality has been high in the sow farms.

Commercial Dog and Cat Breeder Program

Dr. Paul Anderson gave an update on the commercial dog and cat breeding program. The law requiring the Board to license and inspect commercial dog and cat breeding facilities went into effect on July 1.

We have been meeting with field staff members to go over the law. All of the necessary forms that commercial breeders need to get started are posted on the Board's website. During this first year, licensure and registration is voluntary. In July 2015 it will be mandatory to have a license to continue operating.

In the law, it requires the Board to publish a list of licensed breeders. There are a handful of commercial breeders that have already been licensed and have undergone inspection. These breeders are listed on our website. We may also be able to provide summary data. For example, how many commercial breeders are licensed by county.

The law also sets standards for veterinary care, kennel size, facility sanitation, animal well-being and record keeping. Additionally, sexually-intact adult dogs need to be tested for canine brucellosis prior to sale. Some of the pet breeders would like to see a larger-scale program for brucella canis testing.

Animal Disease Traceability Test Exercises

Dr. Stacey Schwabenlander provided a summary of recently-conducted animal disease traceability (ADT) test exercises. The ADT programs in most states rely on the use of ear tags (official ID) in livestock. Applying official ID to livestock makes it possible to trace animals since the number is unique to one animal. Historically, trace work has been done through paper records like test charts, vaccine records, health certificates, etc. Even a few years ago we were still trying to trace animals via paper. We would have to go through thousands of files to find the animals. It was difficult and time consuming.

In recent years, we've tried to move everything into an electronic storage structure. Beginning with 2011 all the cattle and bison Certificates of Veterinary Inspection (CVI) imports and exports are now divided into month/state electronically. Electronic searches can now be done via computer anywhere there is internet access instead of in the St. Paul office storage room. As of September 3, 2014, we have nearly 1.5 million records for cattle and bison in our database. As we move forward we will continue to enter more data.

As part of USDA's new ADT rule in 2013, they will eventually develop performance standards for states' tracing capability. The USDA has already been doing test trace exercises with the states. We, as states, complete test

traces and then report to the USDA on how long it takes us. Per the USDA, there will eventually be consequences for states that can't comply with traceability standards that are set.

In May, we conducted our first trace exercise. The Board located all eight animal ID numbers within 12 hours. The national average to complete the trace was 112 hours. In late August we received another exercise. The USDA gave us 12 animal IDs for imported animals. We have to tell the USDA when they came into Minnesota and from which state. We are still working on it but have traced seven IDs already. The due date for completion is September 29.

Minnesota Livestock Markets

Don Myren gave an overview on trends in Minnesota livestock markets over the years. Markets do change a lot depending on multiple variables. Currently, the number of sellers is down but the number of cattle is steady. More cattle are consigned per seller than in years past. Selling feeder cattle in pot load groups is now common. Also, fewer cattle are being moved from market to market in hopes of making a profit.

Compliance with state and federal rules is dependent upon a good working relationship with the market managers and market veterinarians. Board field staff members regularly visit markets to make sure the rules are being followed, but when we have a good relationship with the market staff there are very few problems.

We also spend time talking with dealers. As part of the Board's rule change, we are requiring dealers to keep more detailed records. Most dealers are doing a great job.

Salmonella Testing at the Minnesota Poultry Testing Laboratory

Dr. Dale Lauer spoke about testing for Salmonella at the Minnesota Poultry Testing Laboratory (MPTL). Salmonella is a large genus of bacteria with over 2,000 serotypes. Twenty to 40 of those serotypes have been identified as disease-causing agents, causing sickness in people, livestock and poultry. In poultry, certain serotypes cause flock sickness and death and also feed conversion and profitability issues. Salmonella enteritidis outbreaks greatly impact the industry. Recalls due to Salmonella have a negative side effect on poultry food companies.

Over the years the method for testing for Salmonella has drastically changed. Environmental sample testing is now a big part of identifying contaminated premises, objects and equipment. With the Board's rule change in 2013, we changed the amount of testing we do in turkey breeder flocks. For the future, we need to find better ways to identify Salmonella serotypes more quickly and accurately. The MPTL is also in need of additional laboratory space to continue expansion of Salmonella testing capabilities. Additional space could be found by adding on to the existing laboratory or by utilizing the MCROC building in Willmar.

Avian Metapneumovirus

Dr. Dale Lauer reported that the Board recently received confirmation from the National Services Veterinary Laboratory that a third Minnesota breeder flock tested positive for avian metapneumorvirus (aMPV) this summer. The flocks, all around 40 weeks old, were located in Olmstead, Brown and Kandiyohi Counties. All three flocks showed clinical signs.

For many years there was a Board-funded aMPV surveillance program. The program ended in 2010 because we thought it was eradicated from Minnesota. However, sampling has continued and that is how the positives were identified. Right now there are no signs of the disease in Minnesota's commercial flocks.

Secure Milk Supply

Dr. Linda Glaser gave an update on the Secure Milk Supply (SMS) plan. The purpose of developing a SMS plan is to maintain business continuity during a foreign animal disease (FAD) response. Milk is important in our state, providing five percent of the nation's milk and six percent of cheese. Each day 25 million pounds of milk moves in Minnesota. During an FAD event, we would need to avoid interruptions of product movement as much as possible. If farms show no evidence of infection, the SMS plan is designed to help producers in a FAD control area move raw milk to market. Components of the plan include risk assessments, surveillance regulations, biosecurity guidance, epidemiological information, permitting guidance and information management.

Emergency planners at the Board and Minnesota Department of Agriculture are working on a regional plan with Wisconsin now but plan to include South Dakota and Iowa in the future. The industry has been asked to be involved and will participate in the planning as time allows. Work has also been done on a Secure Egg Supply plan with more commodities added in the future.

Exhibition Season

Dr. Beth Thompson summarized activities that took place during this year's exhibition season. Last year was an educational year regarding official identification with exhibitors and fair officials. At the beginning of this exhibition season, field staff members made face-to-face contact with most county fair officials. Overall we have received positive feedback on how everything went, and livestock was officially identified. Also, most feedback we received on making the 4H tag an official tag/number was positive. There were some reports in swine and sheep and goats regarding the tag shaft being too short resulting in infection. This could've been due to placement of the tag being too close to the animal's head.

Date and Place of Next Board Meeting

The Board will hold their next quarterly meeting at 9:30 a.m. on Wednesday, December 3, 2014 at the Minnesota Pork Board office in Mankato, Minnesota. Steve Brake adjourned the meeting at 2:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Dr. William L. Hartmann
Executive Director