

Meeting Minutes: Quarterly Board Meeting

Date: September 18, 2019

Location: Holiday Inn Alexandria, 5637 Hwy 29 South, Alexandria, Minnesota 56308

Attendance

Board Members

- Matt Anderson, Vice President, Veterinarian
- Peter Ripka, Producer
- Graham Brayshaw, Veterinarian
- Erica Sawatzke, Producer

Consultants to the Board

- Mary Donahue, U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Veterinary Services
- Laura Molgaard, University of Minnesota College of Veterinary Medicine
- Stephan Schaeftbauer, USDA, Veterinary Services
- Joni Scheftel, Minnesota Department of Health
- Jerry Torrison, University of Minnesota Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory

Guests

- Paul Anderson, Minnesota House of Representatives
- Robyn Corcoran, USDA, Veterinary Services
- Marie Culhane, University of Minnesota Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory
- Hilary Flockhart, Student, University of Minnesota College of Veterinary Medicine
- Elaine Hanson, Minnesota Pet Breeders Association
- Suzanne Law, USDA Veterinary Services
- Michelle Medina, Minnesota Farmers Union
- James Ostlie, Minnesota Department of Agriculture
- David Preisler, Minnesota Pork Producers Association

Staff

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| • Beth Thompson | • Greg Suskovic | • Michael Crusan |
| • Linda Glaser | • Stacey Schwabenlander | • Annie Balghiti |
| • Dale Lauer | • Courtney Wheeler | • Erin Crider |
| • Shauna Voss | • Morgan Grelson | |

Approval of April 24, 2019 Minutes and September 18, 2019 Meeting Agenda

Matt Anderson called the meeting to order and asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the April 24, 2019 meeting. Matt Anderson made a motion, and Graham Brayshaw seconded. A vote was taken, with all present voting aye.

Dr. Anderson asked for any changes or corrections to today's agenda. Hearing none, he asked for a motion to approve the agenda. Peter Ripka motioned, and Graham Brayshaw seconded, and all present voted aye.

Emergency Disease Management Committee – Swine Report

Marie Culhane presented an overview of ongoing swine Emergency Disease Management Committee (EDMC) activities to prepare an effective and efficient response to a swine disease outbreak that also allows for safe continuity of business. The EDMC for swine has 66 members including federal, state, industry and academic experts. The partnership among these groups is vital to developing efficient emergency response plans and effective response management in the event of a disease outbreak.

The EDMC for swine met for the first time on July 15. The group's overall response plans will cover 1) the emergency disease response and 2) the secure food supply plan for continuity of business. The group developed subcommittees to focus on each critical area of a swine disease response:

- Communications.
- Surveillance and diagnostics.
- Information management, including epidemiological investigations, mapping and tracing.
- Health, safety and welfare of pork producers, veterinarians, disease responders and animals.
- Biosecurity and quarantine.
- Permitted movement control as part of risk-based disease management and pork production strategies.
- Mass depopulation, euthanasia and disposal.
- Cleaning and disinfection.
- Wildlife management and vector control.
- Regionalization for interstate and/or international travel.

Subcommittees meet once or twice a week to exchange information and report back to the full EDMC. The next full EDMC meeting will be in October to review the African Swine Fever (ASF) functional exercise, being held September 23-26 and involving many EDMC members. The group will continue to meet monthly through the end of the year to develop response plans, and then will meet biannually to address high-priority issues.

Matt Anderson asked what forms of euthanasia the EDMC is considering. Dr. Culhane stated the plan for smaller farms would be captive bolt; plans for larger farms could include new technology like sodium nitrate capsules or possibly a gas chamber with CO₂ or nitrogen. Ventilation shutdown could be another option, depending on the situation. The EDMC is careful not to be exclusive in choosing options because each farm situation could be different.

Representative Paul Anderson asked if an ASF vaccine is close to production. Dr. Culhane said that a vaccine is, realistically, years away from being available. Jerry Torrison agreed, stating he has had conversations with individuals who say they have a vaccine that is very effective, but he has not seen any data to verify this information. ASF is a very complex virus and so far, no one has found the antibodies to neutralize the disease.

Board of Animal Health Update

Beth Thompson gave an overview of recent Board of Animal Health activities. Over the summer, Board staff investigated several diseases in Minnesota livestock, including cases of Epizootic Hemorrhagic Disease (EHD) in farmed cervids in Houston County; Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE) in Otter Tail County; Equine Infectious Anemia (EIA) in Pine County; West Nile Virus in Swift County; and Equine Herpesvirus Myeloencephalopathy (EHM) in Clay County. There have also been several canine brucellosis cases across the state.

The Board, along with the Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA), USDA and industry partners will be participating in next week's ASF Functional Exercise. Thirteen other states will also be participating to go through four specific aspects of an emergency response (initial foreign animal disease investigation; national movement standstill process; depopulation and disposal; permitted movement) to identify strengths and gaps in their response plans.

The Board, the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and MDA met with Governor Walz's staff last week to discuss Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD). The meeting was an opportunity to share information on disease prevention efforts with each other and the Governor's office.

Federal Farm Bill funding is now available through cooperative agreements with the USDA. The funding cycle is short, and all funds are available to all eligible entities. The Board is preparing proposals now for submission before October 25.

The Board is working on a program to train authorized swine testing agents, similar to the program for authorized poultry testing agents. The Board would train accredited veterinarians, who could train farm managers or workers to test animals, especially in the event of an ASF outbreak. Board staff tested the course with veterinarians in Fairmont on August 30.

Dr. Thompson shared a resolution submitted by MDA Commissioner Thom Petersen at the 2019 National Association of State Departments of Agriculture (NASDA) Annual Meeting. The resolution urges the USDA to work with states on the implementation of the National Animal Disease Preparedness and Response Program, as outlined in the 2018 Farm Bill. It also requests a formal status update on this process.

USDA Update

Stephan Schaeffbauer shared an update on the Mobile Information Management System (MIMS) modernization project. The USDA is almost finished with the messaging service portion, which will change how information is shared with other federal and state systems. This is scheduled to go live this month. Staff are working on moving MIMS to a web-based application with offline functionality and a mobile component for iOS, Android or Windows devices. All current functionality will be included in both the web-based and mobile applications, and they are providing eCVI and Coggins ability for accredited veterinarians.

USDA staff deployments to support California in stopping virulent Newcastle Disease (vND) continue. The Minnesota team has had deployments throughout most of the outbreak. Dr. Schaeffbauer stated that work levels in Minnesota have remained acceptable, despite deployments. She continues to assess the staffing needs in Minnesota to keep the state protected from animal disease.

The 2018 Farm Bill funding is focused on animal disease preparedness and planning. The USDA will be doing cooperative and interagency agreements for this year's NADPRP rollout, which will happen over a short time period. Proposals are

due October 25, and funds will be awarded by the end of 2019. Many entities are eligible for funding, and they can form partnerships to request funds.

The USDA TB Granuloma DNA Testing Program rolled out in August 2019. This program was established after a 2017 pilot of the project showed matching DNA adds assurance that the correct herd is identified, limiting the spread of TB, and saving time and money by not having to test additional herds.

Dr. Schaeffbauer mentioned that USDA Veterinary Services (VS) has hired two new Veterinary Medical Officers (VMOs). Dr. Mackenzie Reberg, formerly of the Board, is working in the Southeast District, and Dr. Kent Hicks is in the Central District. They have also hired Suzanne Law as Administrative Officer. VS still has three vacant positions: two VMOs and one Animal Health Technician.

Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory Update

Jerry Torrison updated the Board on several information technology projects, including the Morrison Swine Health Monitoring Project, named after the late Dr. Bob Morrison. Over half of the U.S. sow population is now in this program. This is a voluntary program where producers self-report data on their herds. In 2019, the U.S. has had the lowest incidence of Porcine Reproductive and Respiratory Syndrome (PRRS) and Porcine Epidemic Diarrhea (PED) since the U.S. began tracking these diseases, due in part to the data collected through this program.

The CWD public outreach event held at the Bell Museum on September 14 was well attended. Find links to the videos of the event presentations on the University's [Center for Food and Animal Health Safety \(CAHFS\) website](#). Funding for research on a faster, easier CWD test has been in place since July, and Dr. Peter Larsen and his team are in the process of setting up a wet lab and beginning research on prion detection.

Dr. Torrison shared information from Christine McCracken's presentation at the Allan D. Leman Swine Conference, an event for the international swine industry. Ms. McCracken stated that China likely has lost half of their swine population to ASF, and swine product prices have risen by 50 percent since June. Predictions are that China's swine industry will continue to deteriorate for about three years and rebuilding the industry will take much longer.

Dr. Torrison reported the VDL lost a net \$1 million in funding for the Fiscal Year (FY) 2019 budget. They used all of their reserves, had to borrow \$300,000 from the Dean's Office to cover remaining costs and are in the process of paying that back. The University received \$1 million during the legislative session and is funding the VDL for FY 2020. The VDL has cut costs by closing their electron microscopy section and are looking for other ways to reduce costs and increase revenues, including automating some processes and offering training and new procedures at the Minnesota Poultry Testing Laboratory (MPTL).

Dr. Thompson asked about the VDL's decision making process for additional testing options. Dr. Torrison said the VDL has talked with the MPTL about their currently offered tests and how often they are used; as well as what tests might make sense to add or discontinue. They have offered reduced pricing on larger serology panels and are having discussions about the possibility of adding testing for non-poultry species.

College of Veterinary Medicine Update

Dr. Laura Molgaard, Interim Dean of the College of Veterinary Medicine (CVM), introduced herself. She took over as dean in August and worked with the former dean, Trevor Ames, for 22 years. The CVM and the University of Minnesota have had many staffing changes recently, including new University President, Joan Gabel. Dr. Molgaard has met with her

several times and served as her host at the Miracle of Birth Center at the State Fair. Dr. Gabel also attended the September 14 CWD event at the Bell Museum.

The newest class of veterinary students began classes this month, including nine students enrolled in the VetFast program, which is an early-decision recruitment program for students interested in livestock and food animal veterinary practice. Their advisor, Dr. Sandra Godden, recently met with them to welcome them to the program and the profession.

The CVM recently received a \$3 million PRRS research grant to investigate how the disease evolves and spreads. The faculty researchers are funded by the Agricultural Research, Education, Extension and Technology Transfer (AGREETT) Program. Dr. Molgaard stated that the AGREETT faculty, including CWD researcher Dr. Peter Larsen, are energetic and doing great work at the University.

Canine Brucellosis

Courtney Wheeler discussed canine brucellosis (*B. canis*), a disease persistent in many bodily fluids of dogs. It can be transmitted through mating or pregnancy, but also by close contact with an infected animal or infected urine or feces. Symptoms include lameness and back pain, eye inflammation, enlarged lymph nodes, abortions and stillbirths. However, some dogs do not show any symptoms. Diagnostic tests for *B. canis* are not always reliable, so using more than one testing method is recommended. Some dogs can be treated with long-term antibiotics, but there is no cure for *B. canis*; recurrence and disease spread are possible.

In Minnesota, *B. canis* is a reportable disease; all test results must be reported to the Board. Any infected animals must be permanently isolated from other dogs not known to be infected or be euthanized. At licensed Commercial Dog and Cat Breeder facilities, all adult dogs that have not been spayed or neutered must be tested and found negative for *B. canis* within 60 days prior to sale or distribution. Dr. Wheeler shared the approved tests and testing protocols and stated that the Board will be introducing an opportunity for licensed breeders to attain a Canine Brucellosis Certified Status as part of the Breeder Excellence Program.

Since 2014, Minnesota has had 42 *B. canis* investigations, with 131 positive dogs, 123 of which have been euthanized; eight have been spayed or neutered and quarantined for life.

Matt Anderson asked for a definition of “quarantined for life.” Dr. Wheeler stated that the infected dog must have no contact with other dogs. She said that enforcing quarantines are difficult because there are no federal or state laws defining canine quarantine rules. Dr. Anderson asked how long the *B. canis* virus lasts outside the host. Dr. Wheeler said it can survive up to eight months in the environment.

Joni Scheftel, Minnesota Department of Health (MDH), discussed the canine brucellosis infection in humans. The main symptoms that present in people are chronic, intermittent fever and weight loss, although sometimes symptoms are milder. Human *B. canis* infection is not well understood because there is no test for it, though tests used on dogs can also be used for people.

Dr. Scheftel stated that cases have shown *B. canis* can be transmitted through normal human/puppy interactions and that it is also a public health risk for veterinarians, breeders and others assisting with whelping. In 2015, MDH noticed an uptick in *B. canis* in Minnesotans who worked with rescues and stray dogs. Investigations revealed most of the infected dogs came from the Pine Ridge and Rosebud Reservations in South Dakota, and testing revealed eight to 20 percent of dogs rescued from the reservations were *B. canis* positive. MDH worked with the Board and the College of Veterinary Medicine to create *B. canis* information sheets with recommendations for rescues. These efforts worked to reduce the number of brucellosis-positive dogs entering the state from South Dakota.

MDH recently completed *B. canis* surveillance in cooperation with the Animal Humane Society (AHS), the University of Minnesota, and the American Kennel Club to determine the *B. canis* prevalence in dogs entering Minnesota. AHS in Golden Valley randomly sampled all incoming dogs. No owner-surrendered dogs tested positive, and only one of the 716 stray dogs tested positive, showing *B. canis* prevalence in dogs entering the state is very low. However, investigation is important if there is evidence of a small increase in cases.

MDH works closely with the Board to protect public health. The Board contacts MDH when there is a positive case. The Board conducts an investigation to stop disease spread in animals, while MDH conducts a public health investigation, including interviewing all veterinary staff and recommending a fever watch for six months for staff who have contact with infected dogs. MDH also contacts pet or kennel owners who may have had exposures to assess their risk.

Dr. Scheftel stated the current recommendations for pet owners exposed to a *B. canis* infected dog are:

- People who have been exposed to bodily fluids of an infected dog and have symptoms of infection should consult with their health care provider and MDH.
- People who have lived with, or been exposed to, an infected dog but do not have symptoms, do not require testing or treatment.

Dr. Brayshaw asked if there are more *B. canis* cases in breeders or rescues. Dr. Wheeler said it's unknown, but the Board finds more cases in breeding facilities because there are more dogs exposed at those facilities than in a home with one or two rescue dogs.

Dr. Wheeler stated the importance of educating veterinarians to be aware of the wide range of *B. canis* symptoms. They can be difficult to recognize, causing a delayed diagnosis and additional exposures in people and pets.

Rabies Vaccination Law

Dr. Scheftel gave an overview of the rabies vaccination law MDH is considering putting forth to legislators. Currently, there is no state law requiring vaccination for dogs or cats; some cities or counties require rabies vaccination for licensing.

The proposed law aims to reduce the number of people requiring rabies vaccinations and the vaccination costs for the state and the public. MDH receives about 2,500 calls annually about animal bites, most of those being dogs. About 25 percent of those calls result in people being vaccinated, which is a painful process. Most of those being vaccinated are children. In addition, rabies vaccinations for people are expensive. MDH estimates the median cost of vaccination for one person is \$7,195. Median lifetime rabies vaccination for a dog is \$280.

Dr. Thompson asked if MDH plans to propose this law in the 2020 legislative session. Dr. Scheftel stated that Governor Walz approves of the proposed law, but when MDH proposes it depends upon MDH legislative priorities. Dr. Thompson recommended that Dr. Scheftel provide a progress report on this at the next Board meeting.

Poultry Rule Change Update

Shauna Voss stated the Proposed Amendments to the Rules Governing Poultry and Mycoplasma Requirements of Turkeys is now at the step of adopting the rule changes without a hearing. The Board has sent out the changes to many individuals and groups, including the Minnesota Turkey Growers Association (MTGA) and Chicken and Egg Association of Minnesota (CEAM), and they have shared them with their members.

The rule changes were published in the State Register in February 2019. In the Notice of Intent to Adopt the Rules, the title was changed to (changes underlined), “Rules Governing Poultry and Mycoplasma Requirements in Turkeys.” It was published in the State Register from June 24 to July 22, 2019, with a 30-day comment period. The rule received one comment of support, and the Board made no edits to the rules after the comment period closed.

The next step is to send the final rules draft to the Governor for approval. Annie Balghiti directed Board members to review the “Certificate of the Board of Animal Health; Authorizing Resolution” document, which Vice President Anderson and one other Board member are required to sign to move forward in the rule making process. Dr. Anderson read the resolution to those in attendance:

Proposed Amendment to Rules Governing Poultry and Mycoplasma Requirements of Turkeys, Minnesota Rules, Parts 1721.0270, 1721.0280, 1721.0290, 1721.0320, 1721.0344, 1721.0300, 1721.0310; Revisor’s ID Number RD4533

I, Matt Anderson, certify that I am a member and the Vice-President of the Board of Animal Health, a board authorized under the laws of the State of Minnesota; that the following is a true, complete, and correct copy of a resolution that the Board of Animal Health adopted at a properly convened meeting on September 18, 2019; that a quorum was present; and that a majority of those present voted for the resolution, which has not been rescinded or modified.

“RESOLVED, that the Board of Animal Health approved the amended rules about poultry in the Revisor of Statutes draft, file number RD-4533, dated June 24, 2019, identified as Minnesota Rules, parts 1721.0270 to 1721.0310, under the Board’s authority under Minnesota Statutes, sections 35.02 and 35.03. Dr. Beth Thompson, the Executive Director of the Board of Animal Health, is authorized and directed to do the following: sign the Order Adopting Rules, to modify the rules as needed to obtain the Revisor of Statutes or the Administrative Law Judge’s approval of the rules, and to perform any other necessary acts to give the rules the force and effect of law.”

Dr. Anderson stated for the record that he, Erica Sawatzke, Graham Brayshaw and Peter Ripka were present, which constituted a quorum. He signed the resolution as Vice President, and Erica Sawatzke signed as Attesting Board Member.

H5/H7 LPAI Response Plan

Dale Lauer reviewed the draft Minnesota H5/H7 Minnesota Low-Pathogenic Avian Influenza (LPAI) Response Plan. Every state that has a commercial poultry industry is required to have a USDA-approved H5/H7 LPAI response plan to allow producers access to federal indemnity and compensation if H5/H7 LPAI is identified on their premises. Minnesota’s plan was last updated in 2012, before the 2015 HPAI outbreak and last fall’s LPAI outbreak. Based on the latter event, the Board has fast tracked updates to this plan in preparation for the next disease event.

This plan outlines the state’s formal response to the introduction of H5/H7 LPAI. With the latest draft plan, the Board has incorporated National Poultry Improvement Plan (NPIP) guidelines into the plan. The specific objectives of the Minnesota plan are to:

- Detect and respond to H5/H7 LPAI exposure in Minnesota poultry flocks.
- Assure LPAI viruses are not circulating in the state’s domestic poultry.
- Monitor and address worker safety.

- Provide guidance and assistance for a consistent and equitable response.
- Minimize trade restrictions to the state's poultry industry.

The Board has been collaboratively drafting the plan with input from the Emergency Disease Management Committee (EDMC), a 50-member group comprised of representatives from the different areas of Minnesota's poultry industry, state poultry associations, the University of Minnesota, MDA, MDH and USDA. Dr. Lauer provided an overview of major changes to the plan:

- **Biosecurity.** National Poultry Improvement Plan (NPIP) participants are expected to have a biosecurity plan based on the NPIP Biosecurity Principles outlined in the NPIP Program Standards. They need to follow Board-recommended Operational (day-to-day activities), Elevated (H5/H7 LPAI is in the area), and Containment (H5/H7 LPAI is found on the premises) plans to prevent disease spread, depending on the situation, outlined in the state's response plan. Every two years, the Board must do an audit of each commercial poultry facility's biosecurity plans. Poultry operations must comply with the NPIP Biosecurity Principles requirements and must have had a satisfactory NPIP biosecurity plan audit within the past two years to be eligible for indemnity and compensation.
- **Influenza Surveillance.** The state plan includes updates to influenza surveillance procedures, including a list of official testing laboratories and official AI samples and tests. Dr. Lauer talked with the EDMC and reviewed the Board rules to decide on appropriate surveillance plans. The current draft plan states that, when the Board is contacted by person who knows or reasonably suspects a reportable disease, the Board will work with the producer's poultry veterinarian or other responsible parties to decide on the next steps, which may include the collection of additional samples to arrive at an official flock status.
- **Flock Management Options.** The commercial egg layer industry requested additional flock management options that would fall between controlled marketing and mass depopulation and disposal. In response, the plan includes several new options, including controlled product marketing of eggs and egg products; controlled movement of hatching eggs; vaccination (with Board authority and USDA guidance and approval); and controlled movement of live poultry other than disposal. Requirements and references for guidance documents are included for each option.
- **Affected Premises.** This section better outlines the steps Board, MPTL, USDA, MDH, and poultry industry representatives will take for premises with infected birds or serologic tests showing exposure to H5/H7 LPAI.
- **Virus Elimination (VE), Repopulation, Restocking.** VE options, environmental testing procedures, and repopulation/restocking activities for H5/H7 infected premises are outlined in detail.
- **Additional Premises Plans.** The plan includes definitions and procedures for both epidemiologically-linked and at-risk premises.

Dr. Lauer stated the Board will be sending the draft response plan to the USDA for comments and approval soon.

Review of Statute Changes to Farmed Cervidae Program

Linda Glaser gave an overview of the legislative changes made to the Farmed Cervidae Program as of July 1, 2019.

- **Annual Inspection Fees** increased to \$250 per year for single-species herds. The fee for hunting preserves, herds with more than one species, or herds used for commercial purposes are \$500 per year. Program staff are collecting herd usage information from herd owners to determine their fees.
- **Annual Inspections** must include a physical inspection of all perimeter fencing and physically inspecting that all animals are properly tagged.
- **Re-inspection Fee.** If an inspector finds anything requiring correction during the annual inspection, he/she will write up a Notice of Violation with a specified deadline for re-inspection. If a fencing deficiency is identified, the fence

must be repaired within 45 days and must be re-inspected within three months. The producer will be charged a re-inspection fee equal to 50 percent of his/her annual inspection fee for this re-inspection.

- **Redundant Gating.** By December 1, 2019, all farmed cervid entry points must have and maintain redundant gating to prevent escapes through an open gate. After December 1, 2019, this will be included in annual inspections.
- **New fencing repairs** must be made with high-tensile wire.
- **Identification.** All white tailed-deer born in a calendar year must have official identification by October 31 of that year.
- **Mandatory Depopulation.** Any CWD-infected herd in Minnesota must be depopulated within a reasonable time determined by the Board, regardless of the availability of USDA indemnity funds.

Dr. Glaser stated producers have received this information through the Animal Bytes electronic newsletter, emails sent directly to them from the Farmed Cervidae Program, a paper mailing, and through visits or phone calls from Board field staff.

Rep. Anderson asked if the Board will start inspecting redundant gating at each facility right after the December 1 deadline. Dr. Glaser said inspections are done throughout the year, and each producer is on a different annual schedule. Inspections scheduled to occur after December 1 will include a redundant gating inspection.

Erica Sawatzke asked if there is a specific timeframe in which a CWD-infected herd must be depopulated. Dr. Glaser stated there is not a specific timeframe, though with mandatory depopulation, the herd owner is required to put the herd down even if there is no monetary compensation available to the owner. In the past, the producer could decide whether to accept the indemnity offer or not and was not required to put the herd down. There could be legal challenges to this regulation if funding is not available to compensate the owner of a CWD infected herd that is required to be depopulated.

Dr. Glaser showed a map of the Board's current CWD Endemic Areas in southeastern Minnesota and in Crow Wing County. These areas represent 15 miles surrounding confirmed CWD cases in the wild. Any farmed cervid herds within those areas are subject to movement restrictions unless they have Board-approved exclusionary fencing in place.

As part of the Office of the Legislative Auditor (OLA) recommendations, the Board held seven Authorized CWD Sample Collector Training sessions last spring, and there may be two more scheduled soon. The authorization process also includes a demonstration by field staff and submission of two successfully tested samples. As of this meeting, 221 people have taken the training, and 60 have been approved as authorized sample collectors. As of January 1, 2020, only authorized sample collectors can collect tissues from farmed cervids for CWD testing. The Board is tracking who collects samples and their success rate. If a collector has repeated problems, the Board will either retrain them or revoke their authorization.

Dr. Glaser stated the Board has sent herd cancellation notices to seven producers in 2019. As of this meeting, four of these herds have been dispersed to other producers or depopulated. Three producers are in communication with the Board to develop a plan for their herds by the end of the year.

Dr. Glaser invited James Ostlie to speak about MDA loan programs available to farmed cervid owners. Mr. Ostlie stated the Rural Finance Authority is offering low-interest loans for the construction of redundant gating that would meet the new requirements. Livestock Investment Grants are also available for this, but the application deadline falls after the deadline for cervid owners to have redundant gating in place. Herd owners can apply for these programs to make improvements in 2020.

Canadian Cattle Transiting through Minnesota

The Board of Animal Health received a request from the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) to allow Canadian producers to transit cattle through Minnesota between Sprague, Manitoba, and pasture land accessible via the Rainy River, Ontario port. Bringing the cattle through Minnesota would save haulers nearly three hours over the Canadian route, which goes around the Northwest Angle of Minnesota.

CFIA has a rule that would allow this transit through Minnesota with no veterinary health check for the livestock. They would like to use this option for all livestock; if approved, the Board would limit this to cattle. Traffic between the ports would go both ways. At this time, the number of loads per week is unknown, but CFIA is suggesting four loads. There is a possibility this number could increase as other producers find out about this option.

If a U.S. producer requested similar transit through Canada, requirements would include permanent official ID, an export health certificate, and appointments at both ports (with CFIA when entering Canada; with USDA when entering the U.S.) to examine the cattle.

Dr. Schwabenlander said the USDA is organizing these discussions with the Board and is willing to accept whatever the Board decides concerning the exemption. She asked Board members to decide to allow the CFIA exemption or require all Canadian cattle to meet the existing state and federal regulations. If the Board decides to allow the exemption, they must also determine additional requirements, including a contingency plan in case of emergency, tracking of trucks and time spent in Minnesota, and any required identification, as well as determining who will check the ID.

After discussion on potential risks and requirements, the Board decided not to support the proposed exemption.

Next Meeting and Adjourn

The next quarterly meeting of the Board of Animal Health will be on Wednesday, December 11, 2019, starting at 9:30 a.m., at the University of Minnesota Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory, Room 280. Matt Anderson made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Graham Brayshaw seconded, with all present voting aye.

Respectfully Submitted,

Beth S. Thompson
State Veterinarian
Executive Director