

Meeting Minutes: Quarterly Board Meeting

Date: December 11, 2019

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

Attendance

Board Members

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

Consultants to the Board

- Mary Donahue, U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Veterinary Services
- Peder Kjeseth, Minnesota Department of Agriculture
- Laura Molgaard, University of Minnesota College of Veterinary Medicine
- Stephan Schaeffbauer, USDA, Veterinary Services
- Jerry Torrison, University of Minnesota Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory

Guests

- Paul Anderson, public citizen and former Board staff member
- Joe Armstrong, University of Minnesota Extension
- Michelle Carstensen, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources
- Marie Culhane, University of Minnesota Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory
- Pam Debele, Minnesota Turkey Growers Association
- Bruce Dokkebakken, Minnesota Dairy Herd Improvement Association
- Brenda Hartkopf, Minnesota Elk Breeders Association
- Barbara Keller, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources
- Brian Larson, USDA, Veterinary Services
- Richard Meech, Cervid Farmer
- Todd Miller, Cervid Farmer
- Steve and Dillan Porter, Cervid Farmers
- David Preisler, Minnesota Pork Producers Association
- Abby Neu Schuft, University of Minnesota Extension
- Tim Spreck, Lobbyist, Minnesota Deer Farmers Association
- Steve and Melissa Uchtyl, Cervid Farmers

Staff

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|-------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| • Beth Thompson | • Courtney Wheeler | • Susan McClanahan |
| • Linda Glaser | • Brian Hoefs | • Michael Herrmann |
| • Dale Lauer | • Morgan Grelson | • Erin Crider |
| • Shauna Voss | • Michael Crusan | |
| • Stacey Schwabenlander | • Annie Balghiti | |

Approval of December 11, 2019 Agenda and September 18, 2019 Minutes

Dean Compart called the meeting to order and asked for any changes or corrections to today's agenda. Erin Crider noted the date of April 24 listed on the agenda is incorrect and it should be September 18. Hearing no other changes, he asked for a motion to approve the revised agenda. Graham Brayshaw motioned, and Peter Ripka seconded, and all present voted aye.

Mr. Compart asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the September 18, 2019 meeting. Graham Brayshaw made the motion, and Matt Anderson seconded it, with all present voting aye.

Board of Animal Health Update

Beth Thompson introduced Brian Hoefs, the newest senior veterinarian at the Board. Dr. Hoefs has a background in equine health and is well-versed in regulatory medicine. He will be covering the Board's horse, swine and exhibition programs.

Drs. Thompson and Hoefs attended the Minnesota-Iowa Foreign Animal Disease Task Force Meeting in Austin yesterday. It focused on African Swine Fever (ASF) and included producers, veterinarians, Dr. Marie Culhane from the University of Minnesota, and their counterparts from Iowa. Both states shared their plans for a disease outbreak, including steps for permitted movement or a stop movement. These meetings help states build a coordinated response. In mid-February, Minnesota will be joining with the top hog-producing states for the National Assembly of State Animal Health Officials (NASAHO) ASF Working Group Meeting to continue discussions on emergency response to an ASF outbreak.

In March, the Board's St. Paul office is planning to move to the first floor of the Orville L. Freeman Building. The Board office is currently on the fourth floor. The Board is working with the Department of Administration to coordinate plans for the move.

Budget Update

Morgan Grelson gave an overview of the Board's budget for fiscal years (FY) 2019-2021. Mr. Grelson showed information on expenses in FY 2019 by program. Starting July 1, 2019, the Board began breaking down expenses into more programs, including Cattle, Companion Animals, Swine, and Poultry Biosecurity. The more detailed expense breakdowns will be featured in future budget presentations. He also showed FY 2019 expenses by category. He noted the increased spending on Professional Technical Services, which accounted for \$1.7 million of expenses. A bulk of the increased spending in this category included one-time contracts using emergency preparedness dollars, which expired June 30, 2019. Mr. Grelson thanked Annie Balghiti for working with vendors to assemble the contracts.

The Board identified emergency preparedness and farmed Cervidae as FY 2021 priorities. During the last legislative session, the Board received \$200,000 for FY 2020 and \$200,000 for FY 2021 for emergency preparedness activities. The legislature provided additional farmed Cervidae funding of \$120,000 for FY 2020 and \$200,000 in FY 2021 to help cover additional expenses for increased regulatory efforts.

Mr. Grelson presented information on the current budget year, FY 2020. He noted spending on Professional Technical Services has returned to the \$1 million level. Information Technology expenses have increased, as Minnesota IT Services (MNIT) increased rates for state agencies.

The state budget is projected at a \$1.323 billion surplus for FY 2020-2021. While this is good news for the current biennium, budget challenges remain, and an economic slowdown remains in the forecast.

Legislative Update

Peder Kjeseth stated the 2020 legislative session begins on February 11, 2020. The Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA) bonding requests include a \$30 million ask for improvements to the laboratory building MDA shares with the Department of Health (MDH) in St. Paul. These improvements will help maintain the services provided and improve employee safety. The other bonding request is for \$100 million for the Rural Finance Authority, which provides low interest loans to farmers. The program has seen a recent uptick in loan applications. Mr. Kjeseth expects to have an update on the bonding package in the next month.

Mr. Kjeseth said Governor Walz intends to build up the budget reserve with the projected \$1.323 billion surplus, and there is still an opportunity to increase funding for programs. The MDA is preparing a request for one-time emergency preparedness funding, specifically for an ASF response. These funds would be used to purchase cold weather equipment for depopulation, disposal and cleaning; and equipment for laboratory testing, including portable test kits.

USDA Update

Stephan Schaeffbauer shared details about a new option available for veterinary medical officers (VMOs) to complete Comparative Cervical Test (CCT) training. In the past, the only way to receive this training was through a Program Disease Field Skills Course (PDFSC), which comprehensively covers program disease topics, or a Professional Development Services (PDS)-hosted district or national training, where Rural Health Center staff teach academic and practical skills. These courses are only held a few times a year, and they have long waiting lists. The Rural Development Center has created a new opportunity for VMOs who urgently need the training. They may make a request through the RHC for training by a designated field CCT trainer. VMOs trained this way receive provisional authorization to perform CCT testing for 12 months, subject to completing the next available PDFSC or district/national training.

Dr. Schaeffbauer said the application period for the vacant southwest district VMO position closed on December 6, and the VMO position in the central district is in the review phase. This position will likely be advertised between January and March. The timeline to fill the vacant Animal Health Technician position in the southeast district is tentative.

In following the National Animal Health Monitoring System (NAHMS) study schedule, studies in swine and beef feedlots are anticipated in 2020. The NAHMS 2019 study focuses on goats and involves 84 percent of U.S. goats and 87 percent of goat farms with five or more goats. NAHMS voluntary studies are done in collaboration with industry. This year's study had several objectives, including describing changes in animal health, nutrition and management; describing antimicrobial stewardship and resistance prevalence; and providing a serologic and DNA bank for future research. The study is in the data collection phase. After the initial survey request, 40 percent of Minnesota's participating producers responded, and 83 percent of those producers agreed to continue to participate. Minnesota field staff will visit participating producers' farms to administer the survey and collect biological samples. This process will be finished in February, and Dr. Schaeffbauer will update the Board at a 2020 quarterly meeting.

In October, the USDA suspended the previously announced timeline for the transition to electronic identification (eID) for cattle. The USDA recognizes the importance of eID for animal disease traceability and is making every

effort to have the required comment period occur as quickly as possible. In the meantime, they are pushing forward with IT enhancements to help the transition go smoothly when the process begins again. USDA also continues to offer free metal tags and is exploring funding options to make calfhood vaccination RFID tags.

Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory Update

Jerry Torrison reported the Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory's (VDL) biennial budget for 2020-2021 received an increase of \$1 million annually. The University of Minnesota allotted the VDL 75 percent of requested funds, and the College of Veterinary medicine provided the remainder. With this budget, the VDL funding has increased to where it was nine years ago. Dr. Torrison stated they will be using some of these funds to address faculty/staff shortages and request new equipment to increase efficiency.

Dr. Torrison said the VDL's new IHC autostainer, used for CWD and scrapie testing, is performing well and is being validated by the National Veterinary Services Laboratory (NVSL). Once validated, it will help the VDL cut down on turnaround time and cost for these tests. Dr. Torrison expects validation to be complete soon.

Beginning January 1, 2020, those who collect CWD samples are required to be trained and authorized by the Board. The VDL will cross reference all sample submissions against the Board's list of authorized sample collectors. If the sample collector is not authorized, the bill for testing will go to the farmer; not the Board. The VDL and the Board hope this will be an incentive for producers to get authorized.

Dr. Torrison provided a brief update on ASF and emergency preparedness. In the U.S., no one is allowed to do ASF testing on items confiscated at the borders. In October, Australia reported testing 27 tons of cooked pork products, 49 percent were positive for ASF, showing this disease is still a significant threat. The VDL is working with Mike Starkey on an ask for emergency preparedness funding for the VDL. The equipment it would purchase would help automate testing processes during a foreign animal disease outbreak, when the lab could quickly exhaust staffing resources. Dr. Torrison is concerned ASF testing could cause the VDL to reach capacity faster than other diseases would. ASF clinical signs are often slow to appear, so each herd may require many tests.

College of Veterinary Medicine Update

Laura Molgaard stated Larissa Minicucci, a College of Veterinary Medicine (CVM) faculty member, passed away in November. She worked on many research projects in her time at the CVM and will be greatly missed. Dr. Molgaard has been in contact with Dr. Minicucci's husband, Dr. Lou Cornicelli, and plans for a memorial will be announced at a later date.

Stacy Pollock, manager of the Minnesota Poultry Testing Laboratory (MPTL), received the 2019 Outstanding Performance Award for Diagnostic Services during the American Association of Veterinary Laboratory Diagnosticians (AAVLD) Meeting in October in Providence, Rhode Island. Stacy was recognized for outstanding leadership during the 2015 HPAI outbreak and the MPTL's move to a temporary facility and the back to their remodeled facility while maintaining all testing programs.

The veterinary education partnership between the University of Minnesota and South Dakota State University should have final approval soon and should yield more third- and fourth-year students on campus.

NPIP Biosecurity Audit Process Update

Dale Lauer said following the 2015 Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) outbreak, the USDA revised their conditions for payment of HPAI indemnity claims. The new conditions require larger poultry producers to adopt

the 14 National Poultry Improvement Plan (NPIP) biosecurity principles and to have an auditable biosecurity plan for each site that addresses each principle.

NPIP created an audit form and training for the official state agencies in charge of the auditing process, which in Minnesota, is the Board. Audits are conducted by the MPTL and field staff, who review the biosecurity plans and supporting documentation to determine if each site has:

- A company biosecurity plan.
- A designated biosecurity coordinator.
- A map of their line of separation and perimeter buffer area.
- Training for employees and managers on biosecurity practices.
- Pest control.
- Tracking of morbidity and mortality.

Shauna Voss discussed the audit process steps. They begin by notifying the producer of the audit by phone and in writing. The audit request form includes a checklist of required documentation. Once the producer sends back the audit paperwork, an auditor reviews it. If something is missing or the plan is deficient in a particular area, they issue a Corrective Action to the producer. This process can be repeated until the plan and all the supporting documentation has been deemed acceptable. If the producer does not respond to the initial audit request or if they do not respond to the requested Corrective Action, they receive a letter stating they will be marked as unsatisfactory if they do not respond within 30 days.

As of this meeting, the Board has completed 90 audits. Twenty-four audits are in progress or ready for auditing, with an estimated 12-15 additional producers that still need to be contacted for their first audit. The 12 producers that were audited in 2017 will be audited again by the end of 2019. The Board has not issued any “unsatisfactory” audits.

Dr. Voss summarized challenges identified during the audit process. Producers sometimes find it difficult to write down their plans on paper. Some producers also have trouble seeing the value of investing time in the audit process. Also, auditors interpret plans differently, and regular communication among auditors helps audit consistency.

As the auditors begin conducting the second round of audits for producers, they are discussing expectations for producers and suggesting updates to the audit form. NPIP will be reviewing any changes to the audit form, which will be implemented if approved. The Board will be adding in-person audits as an option and working with the University of Minnesota Extension (Extension) and poultry associations for increased education and outreach.

Abby Neu Schuft discussed how Extension is helping with outreach efforts. Their online learning center includes videos and document resources to help producers understand and develop a unique biosecurity plan that follows the NPIP biosecurity principles and the audit process. Extension is also exploring opportunities to meet one-on-one with producers who are late to adopt biosecurity practices.

Dean Compart asked if producers who are headed into the second round of the auditing process are updating or building on their plans. Dr. Voss stated they expect to see a mix of updated and unchanged plans. Some producers are not focusing on biosecurity when HPAI has not been recently identified. Mrs. Neu Schuft agreed, saying these plans can be difficult to complete, but it is extension’s job is to help producers with their biosecurity plans when needed.

Visual Official Identification Phase Out

Stacey Schwabenlander said the Board planned to offer free metal NUES tags through the end of 2019, which was in line with the proposed USDA phase out of visual ID. In the end of October, the USDA suspended the proposed phase out to allow time for a comment period. The Board's supply of silver metal NUES tags has been depleted, and the orange metal brucellosis tags will likely be available into 2020. NUES tags are still available for purchase from some manufacturers.

Dr. Schwabenlander asked the Board for a decision on how proceed with the visual ID phase out in Minnesota. She presented three possible options:

1. Align with the USDA and continue to issue metal NUES tags.
2. Move forward with electronic identification (eID) and move away from NUES tags.
3. No longer order USDA metal tags or distribute them. The Board would work with distributors of metal NUES tags to sell directly to producers.

Dr. Schwabenlander recommends the third option. It is a compromise to provide tags at a low cost to producers and simultaneously begin a move toward eID. Sales of tags would be reported to the Board, and resources (staff time and shipping costs) could be dedicated to other traceability work.

The Board continues to prepare for the transition to eID. Producers and veterinarians can order 840 RFID tags from tag manufacturers with their federal premises ID number (PIN) or Minnesota location identifier (LID). The Board has an online form for requesting these numbers. The Board has been granted funding from USDA and \$12,700 will be able to be used for eID equipment, which could be used to assist concentration points interested in the eID transition.

Minnesota is preparing to receive more data electronically. Another state has created an electronic data platform and is willing to share it with Minnesota. This system would have the capability for veterinarians to issue eCVIs, electronic TB and brucellosis test charts and more. This type of electronic data platform would allow for increased data accuracy, real-time access to traceability data, and an enhanced ability to respond in animal disease emergencies.

There were several questions about price ranges and types of RFID wands. Dr. Schwabenlander said the wands range in price and function and the majority can be Bluetooth-connected to a mobile device. Additional questions focused on the current adoption rate of RFID technologies. The representative from the Dairy Herd Improvement Association said around 58 percent of the tags they currently distribute to producers are RFID. Dr. Schwabenlander said she anticipates electronic identification will someday be the standard for identifying animals.

Matt Anderson asked if the tag transition is affecting species other than cattle and bison. Dr. Schwabenlander cited a couple of examples; metal tags are still available for feeder pigs at markets and scrapie tags for sheep and goats.

Dean Compart asked for a motion to vote on one of the presented options. Graham Brayshaw moved to vote for the third option: The Board will discontinue ordering metal NUES tags from the USDA and work with tag distributors of to sell directly to producers. Peter Ripka seconded the motion. Mr. Compart asked for any additional discussion. Hearing none, he asked for a vote, with all voting aye.

Chronic Wasting Disease Research Update

Peter Larsen stated the legislature provided over \$2 million for his team's research into developing a prototype of a fast and easy CWD test. They have used the funds to hire researchers and students, as well as secure known CWD-positive and CWD-negative materials to test. They also have laboratory space, which includes a core wet lab and several smaller wet labs around the CVM for research and development of new diagnostics.

Research will begin in January using Real-Time Quaking-Induced Conversion (RT-QuIC). Their first experiment will use tissues and feces collected from 500 deer by the DNR. The goal will be to find 12 known CWD positive control samples in the grouping. Researchers will use RT-QuIC to detect the samples with CWD and discover if it can identify additional positive cases missed by IHC.

Dr. Larsen discussed plans for research into next-generation CWD diagnostic development. Researchers will be working on an antibody engineering project starting in January. Other research will focus on surface plasmon resonance (SPR), a diagnostic tool currently used in hospitals that researchers will modify to detect prions. This could lead to a "pregnancy test"-type test for CWD.

Dr. Larsen expressed interest in collecting tissue and environmental samples from CWD-positive farms. Their research could potentially identify CWD prions in different areas of the farm, which could offer clues about disease spread.

Dr. Larsen and the University are organizing the Minnesota Center for Prion Research and Outreach (MNPRO), a multidisciplinary center focusing on prion and protein-misfolding diseases, which include Alzheimer's Disease, ALS, and scrapie. Dr. Larsen introduced Marc Schwabenlander, MNPRO's CWD Research Program and Outreach Manager, who serves as a liaison between MNPRO and primary CWD stakeholders.

Dr. Larsen expressed concern over the misinformation about CWD among different communities. He and Mr. Schwabenlander have presented to groups around the state about the science of CWD. Additionally, the Center for Animal Health and Food Safety (CAHFS) has helped them put together the [CWD Watch website](https://cahfs.umn.edu/chronic-wasting-disease-cwd-watch) (<https://cahfs.umn.edu/chronic-wasting-disease-cwd-watch>), which includes a hunter's toolkit to help them understand why it is important to test their animals, videos of TED-style talks by University of Minnesota experts, maps, and basic information on CWD science.

Proposed DNR Statute Language Changes and Request to Designate a CWD Disease Control Area

Proposed DNR Statute Language Changes

Dr. Thompson was contacted by the Governor's office last week on a proposed language change to DNR statutes concerning importing deer or elk carcasses from other states. Currently, the Board has a rule and the DNR has statutes banning import of wild whole deer or elk carcasses from other states. However, there is a loophole in both agencies' language that allows individuals to bring in whole carcasses from out-of-state game farms.

Michelle Carstensen gave background on their 2016 rule change and 2019 statute changes regarding whole carcasses. She said a conservation officer stopped someone hauling two carcasses from a game farm. As they were not hunter-harvested animals, they were allowed.

Dr. Thompson presented the proposed changes to the DNR statute:

97A.505 POSSESSING WILD ANIMALS

Subd. 8 Importing ~~hunter-harvested~~ Cervidae carcasses.

- (a) Importing ~~hunter-harvested~~ Cervidae carcasses into Minnesota is prohibited except for cut and wrapped meat, quarters or other portions of meat with no part of the spinal column or head attached, antlers, hides, teeth, finished taxidermy mounts, and antlers attached to skull caps that are cleaned of all brain tissue.
- (b) ~~Hunter-harvested~~ Cervidae carcasses taken originating from outside of Minnesota may be transported on a direct route through the state by nonresidents.

Dr. Carstensen asked if the Board's rules could be made to reflect these changes. Dr. Thompson said it would take a rule change.

There was concern over the lack of communication between states when a hunter-harvested animal tests positive for CWD. Dr. Thompson commented that she notifies other state's animal health officials about test results from farmed cervids when appropriate, but there is no set protocol for notification between states.

Request to Designate a CWD Disease Control Zone

Dr. Thompson stated a press release went out yesterday concerning a new CWD-positive hobbyist herd in Douglas County. The herd had only two deer, a buck and a doe. The buck killed the doe, which was tested and found to be CWD positive. The buck was also submitted for testing.

Dr. Thompson met with Mary Donahue on Monday to look at possible connections to this herd. Based on the Board's investigation to date, there are connections to six other farms in six other Minnesota counties. None of the counties are in the current CWD endemic area or any of the previously confirmed herds, including Crow Wing and Winona Counties. In addition, a potentially exposed fawn and doe from one of the traced herds have died in the last two weeks. Samples have been submitted for CWD testing.

The Board is conducting a thorough investigation of herd history and animal movements to determine any likely routes of CWD transmission in the infected herd. In order to stop possible further dissemination and exposure to CWD and protect the health of the domestic animals in the state, Dr. Thompson requested the Board designate the entire state of Minnesota as a disease control zone and restrict the movement of farmed white-tailed deer until the disease investigation is complete.

A component of the request is to allow the DNR to simultaneously evaluate CWD risks to the wild population while the farm investigations occur. The designation would require all farmed Cervidae producers who have white-tailed deer to obtain a permit or movement certificate from the Board prior to movement onto or off of their property. Movements to slaughter would be permitted.

Dr. Thompson displayed Minnesota Rule 1721.0020 Subpart 6, showing the Board has authority to designate a disease control zone. Given the proven potential for CWD to spread to parts of the state where the disease has not historically been found, the fact that these newly affected herds do not have a record of importing white-tailed deer from another state with endemic CWD, and the fact that the number of white-tailed deer movements across the state is significant on an ongoing basis, designating the entire state of Minnesota as a disease control zone is necessary to protect the health of the state's domestic animals, specifically Cervidae.

Dr. Thompson estimated the Board would need one month to complete or finish a good portion of the epidemiology investigations, and the Board would release the disease control zone upon completion, unless another event occurs that would extend the designation.

Dean Compart asked for a motion to move to discussion of establishing a 30-day CWD Disease Control Zone. Peter Ripka made the motion, and Graham Brayshaw seconded.

Melissa Uchtyl asked how long it would take to get a permit. Many of the producers she works with want to move animals already purchased during January. She asked how long it will take to allow the purchasing farm to receive the animal. Dr. Thompson stated the 30 days would begin today. She inquired if movements needed to take place before January 11. Mrs. Uchtyl said no, but she was concerned a 30-day disease control zone could set precedent for extending it another 30 days or beyond if the investigation is not complete. Dr. Thompson stated permit requests with sound reasons for movement could be turned around within hours. She also stressed the Board does not want animals to move during the investigation, as the situation is very serious. She asked for cooperation of all during the investigation.

Several farmed Cervidae producers expressed strong concerns over calling Minnesota a “disease control zone.” Even if permits are required only for producers with white-tailed deer, some states will see Minnesota is a CWD disease control zone and will not allow Minnesota cervids of any species – reindeer, elk, etc. – into their state. Dr. Thompson said that the Board rules say it must be called a disease control zone. She asked if it made a difference if the control zone was specific to white-tailed deer. Mrs. Uchtyl said it would not matter to some states. Mrs. Uchtyl stated that if Minnesota is a disease control zone, they will not allow any cervids from Minnesota into their state for five years. This label would have long-lasting, devastating financial repercussions on Minnesota’s cervid producers.

Brenda Hartkopf said the Douglas County herd was very small and already depopulated. She asked if declaring the entire state a disease control zone was necessary. Dr. Thompson stated the current traced animal movements from this herd involve five to six other herds in as many counties, including one herd with nearly 200 animals.

There was discussion on quarantine of only involved farms; not stopping all farmed cervid movements. Mr. Compart said at this point, we do not know how many other farms are involved. Farmed Cervidae producers felt quarantines and restricted movements should be applied to a herd only if the Board discovers a movement that connects it to the Douglas County herd.

There was discussion on what the Board could call this 30-day period other than the “disease control zone” designation. Producers wanted language that would not cause other states to ban cervids from Minnesota. Dr. Glaser mentioned that within the Board’s CWD endemic area, they are called restricted movements instead of quarantines or permitted movements.

Producers appealed to the Board not to take the step of declaring the state a “disease control zone.” Producers expressed frustration at the level of scrutiny the farmed Cervidae industry is under compared to other agricultural pursuits. Dr. Thompson expressed her appreciation for their comments and said the reason she made this recommendation is to allow officials time to figure out what’s going on with this CWD detection where the involved herds appear to be trading amongst themselves.

Steve Porter thanked Dr. Thompson and said the Board has done a great job regulating farmed Cervidae and thanked her for extending producers an opportunity to appeal before the Board.

Mr. Compart asked if there were any other legal options the Board could consider. Mrs. Uchytel suggested asking all producers to voluntarily stop movement. Dr. Thompson then asked if instead they could declare a county-level control zone and asked producers if other states would allow deer from unaffected counties in Minnesota. Producers agreed that some states still would not allow deer from Minnesota into their state. Dr. Thompson asked if our current CWD endemic areas affect the industry. Producers said CWD in the state has affected movement into some states.

One producer agreed the Board needs time to investigate and a 30-day, “must-have a permit” to move deer would be acceptable, though it does not make things easy for producers.

Mrs. Hartkopf asked if there was any connection to carcasses or taxidermy being brought in from another state in the Douglas County case. Dr. Thompson said the Board needs to investigate this with all the herd owners. As of now, there is no known connection to whole carcasses or taxidermy imported from other states.

Mr. Compart said if this was a disease in another species, the Board would have to implement restricted movement and call it a control zone. He asked if it could be called a movement stoppage instead of a disease control zone. Dr. Thompson consulted with staff and concluded the wording has to match a statute or rule.

Mr. Compart asked Dr. Torrison for his opinion about stopping movement to investigate. Dr. Torrison said it appeared there were several contacts that have not been defined in the investigation. He touched on his experience planning for African Swine Fever (ASF), where there are plans to implement a national 72-hour movement standstill for pigs until adequate investigation has taken place. He noted stop movements also require plans for starting movement again. He emphasized getting a handle on the disease should be a priority. Dr. Glaser noted the example of ASF is a foreign animal disease, which carries more authoritative powers than endemic diseases like CWD.

Erica Sawatzke stated she had experience with the 2015 HPAI outbreak. The pockets of the state were called disease control areas; the whole state was not. She asked Dr. Lauer if he thought the entire state should have been declared a disease control area. Dr. Lauer stated HPAI and CWD are completely different diseases. During the 2015 HPAI event in Minnesota, disease control areas were established quickly because of disease transmission to contain the virus but also to allow movement and continuity of business for unaffected premises. It is important to recognize the impact these diseases have on both the affected and unaffected producers in each situation.

Dr. Brayshaw stated there could be years of CWD exposure before symptoms appear. There are six herds involved, including one with almost 200 animals, and nobody knows how many total farms are affected. This detection could be a sentinel for a widespread infection. Mrs. Uchytel countered that it could also be a singular case and harm the farmed Cervidae industry if the Board establishes a disease control zone.

A producer asked how Dr. Thompson decided on 30 days for the temporary disease control zone. Mary Donahue briefly covered the investigation timeline of when she will be meeting with the owner of the infected premises and scheduling a visit to a traceback premises. There are five other farms to schedule with as well. Dr. Donahue coordinates these to include a Board or USDA field staff person. Currently, two animals are being tested for CWD at the NVSL, and another animal may be tested as well. Results will take another week to 10 days. If any of those animals are positive, that will expand the investigation. The Christmas and New Year’s holidays also factor into the timeline of scheduling farm visits and receiving test results. Dr. Donahue also mentioned another potentially connected farm, pending test results. It does not meet the standards for a quarantine now, but the Board has issued a quarantine for the farm out of an abundance of caution.

There was discussion on terminology to use in place of “disease control zone.” Dr. Thompson pointed to Minnesota Rule 1721.0020 Subpart 6, which states the Board shall designate disease control zones. Annie Balghiti said under this rule, you must designate disease control zones to begin permitted movement. Dr. Thompson added that the Board must determine disease control zone sizes and locations.

Dr. Thompson asked if there was concern among producers that there are five to six white-tailed deer farms that might have CWD, and one of those could be a neighbor. Producers said yes and then pointed out that the source could also be in the wild deer population. Dr. Thompson said that, while she could not speak for the DNR or MDA, she felt they would appreciate the Board establishing a disease control zone so they would have time to investigate.

Dr. Stacey Schwabenlander asked if anyone had an example of another state’s import requirements specific to the “disease control zone” wording so the Board could see the rules producers have referred to during the meeting. Producers specifically mentioned Oklahoma and South Dakota. Producers said a lot of states ask what Minnesota’s movement requirements are and then decide if they want to mirror those rules for movements.

Mrs. Hartkopf stated she is comfortable with what the Board has done so far in issuing quarantines for the infected premises and traced farms and encouraged the Board to proceed with their investigation in that manner. If CWD is found on another farm, the Board should quarantine that farm. Other producers agreed with this opinion.

Mrs. Uchytel asked when the DNR last tested for CWD in Douglas County. Dr. Carstensen said she would have to check. Producers stated they would like to see the DNR perform testing proactively around the state instead of waiting for CWD detections on a farm to instigate surveillance sampling.

Mr. Compart called for a vote on whether the Board wants to establish a disease control zone in the state. Dr. Thompson clarified that they could declare a disease control zone as the entire state or by county.

Erica Sawatzke asked if there was a downfall to putting the six farms in quarantine instead of declaring a control zone. Dr. Thompson said it’s the difference between chasing the disease and taking proactive measures to limit risk of spread.

Mr. Compart asked if the Board could continue with quarantines as needed for 30 days for the investigation and revisit to declare disease control zones by county, as necessary. He stated he would like producers to respect the investigation and not move deer during this time. Rich Meech said he will communicate with the farmers who are members of the Minnesota Deer Farmers Association (MDFA) to respect the Board’s investigation and not move deer during the 30-day period. He noted that not all deer farmers are MDFA members. Producers in the room said that most producers would respect this request from the Board.

Dr. Brayshaw noted that establishing a CWD control zone would lower the risk of disease spread as much as possible. With quarantines alone, the risk increases. Producers noted that labeling a county a disease control zone will be enough for some states to refuse movement of animals from farms up to 30 miles outside the disease control zone.

Dr. Glaser said if the Board proceeded without a disease control zone and CWD was found, the Board would send out a press release to announce it and the county would be added to the national list of known state and county CWD endemic areas. Mrs. Uchytel said then it would occur naturally and not force all producers under a blanket disease control zone.

Mr. Compart restated the motion to declare the state of Minnesota a disease control zone for 30 days and allow permitted movement of white-tailed deer during that time. In order to take the action, all five Board members must unanimously vote in favor of it. He asked for all members to vote individually by saying aye if in favor or nay if opposed to the motion. All members voted nay.

Mr. Compart said the Board will continue to quarantine farms as needed for the next 30 days and should hold the next meeting in January to reevaluate the situation based on the investigation findings. He expressed his sympathy for producers but also the Board's need to act in the best interest of the health of Minnesota's domestic animals.

Mrs. Uchtyl asked if the Board could send out communications to deer farmers requesting they not move any animals for the next 30 days. Producers in the room were certain most deer farmers would comply with that request for up to 60 days. They also offered to help communicate it to other producers.

Dr. Thompson said she appreciated their assistance, but she is concerned about the producers absent from this meeting and the uncertainty of their compliance with the Board's request for stopping movement.

Peter Ripka made a motion to voluntarily suspend the movement of white-tailed deer in Minnesota for the next 35 days, concluding on January 15, and for the Board to notify all producers of this request. Mr. Compart asked for a second to the motion. Erica Sawatzke seconded. Mr. Compart opened the motion for discussion.

Dr. Torrison suggested the Board create talking points for everyone to explain the situation, what Minnesota is doing about it, and why. Producers and the Board need to be sharing the same message. After a short discussion, Mr. Compart agreed. Michael Crusan said the points would include language about the need to conduct the investigation to stop disease spread, potential impacts of a disease control zone on the industry, and clarify unaffected farms/species ability to continue movements. Mr. Crusan will prepare these points and distribute them to the Board and industry members present at the meeting.

David Preisler asked if the Board could require movement permits without establishing disease control zones. Dr. Thompson said doing so would likely require a rule change.

Mr. Compart called for a vote on the motion, with all voting aye in favor of the voluntary suspension of white-tailed deer movement until January 15, 2020.

DNR Chronic Wasting Disease Surveillance Update

Michelle Carstensen reviewed the new DNR wild deer CWD surveillance regulations:

- **Southeastern Minnesota:** The DNR has expanded the CWD Management Zone and added new CWD Control Zones, in accordance with their updated disease management plan. Within the disease management zone, the DNR now allows up to 3 legal bucks per hunter per year, and one legal buck per licensed season. Mandatory CWD test results are required for movement of whole deer carcasses, including fawns, outside of the zone. The control zones require mandatory results for all deer and fawns before moving out of the control or management zones. Meat or quarters may leave either zone immediately.
- **North Central:** The DNR established a CWD Management Zone in Area 604. Regulations include an early antlerless hunting season, one legal buck per hunter per year, mandatory CWD testing during all seasons, and voluntary testing of fawns. CWD test results are required for whole carcass movement outside of the management zone.

They have also placed CWD sampling stations in both the Southeast and North Central zones. These were available all of archery and muzzleloader season. These were staffed daily by DNR and veterinary students during firearms season. Many have quartering stations and dumpsters available for hunters.

The DNR's Adopt-A-Dumpster program is underway. It was created by the 2019 Minnesota Legislature to help hunters comply with carcass movement restrictions and minimize the risk of spreading chronic wasting disease in CWD management and control zones. Groups can help by sponsoring a dumpster site or donating to the program.

Recreational feeding bans are in effect in counties affected by the North Central and Southeast CWD management zones and the surveillance area around the Meeker County cervid farm where CWD was found in 2017. In the North Central and Southeast zones, the ban also includes deer attractants that contain or claim to contain cervid urine, blood, or other bodily fluids.

Dr. Carstensen gave an overview of CWD surveillance testing in Fall 2019:

- **North Central CWD Management Zone:** 3,916 samples tested, 3,562 not-detected; 354 results pending.
- **Central CWD Surveillance Zone:** 532 samples tested, all results not-detected. No CWD has been detected in the wild in three years of testing. The DNR will dissolve this zone; there are no plans for testing in this area next year.
- **Southeast CWD Management Zone:** 10,941 samples tested, 8,374 not-detected, 2,547 pending, 13 confirmed CWD-positive, and eight CWD-suspects. CWD persists in the Fillmore County area where the disease was originally found. There also are three new areas of disease in Winona and Houston Counties, including around the Winona County CWD-positive farm.
- **Preston-Lanesboro Area:** 61 percent of the CWD positive cases since 2016 are in this 8-by-8 square mile area.

Dr. Carstensen stated the prevalence of CWD in the Preston-Lanesboro area is still very low (less than 1 percent) and has increased this year compared to 2017-2018. The DNR is testing at nearly twice the rate they were testing in previous years. As in the past, they will also be holding special hunts before and after Christmas, and USDA targeted culling on private land in the Southeast management zone.

The DNR is working with the Board, several agencies, meat processors, waste haulers, landfill operators, and other stakeholders in the CWD and Landfills Working Group. This group is addressing concerns of safe, proper disposal of CWD-positive deer and finding workable disposal options. Upcoming discussions include creating guidelines for landfills on how to handle deer remains and establishing regulations to manage waste from taxidermists and meat processors.

Farmed Cervidae Update

Linda Glaser said the number of farmed Cervidae herds has decreased in 2019 from 383 in March to 330 today. She anticipates more will be closing their businesses before the end of the year. The most cited factors include the new annual fee structure and regulations put in place on July 1.

Board staff are in the process of collecting information on herd usage to determine producer fees. Hobbyist herds not used for commercial gain and with only one species have a \$250 annual fee. Herds with multiple species and commercial sales have a \$500 annual fee. Over half (161) of the state's producers are considered hobbyists. The second largest herd usage is Trophy/Hunting Animal Sales (101 herds), followed by Breeding (86).

The Board has held seven authorized CWD sample collector training sessions and scheduled three more. As of this meeting, 221 individuals have taken the training, and 103 have been approved. Dr. Glaser expects more to be approved before the end of the year. Beginning January 1, 2020, only authorized CWD sample collectors will qualify for Board-funded sample testing.

The Board has issued eight herd cancellations in 2019. Five of these herds have been depopulated, two have entered into compliance agreements, and one has requested a contested case hearing to challenge a civil penalty.

Next Meeting and Adjourn

The next quarterly meeting of the Board of Animal Health will be on Wednesday, January 15, at 9:30 a.m. in St. Paul.

Dean Compart asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Erica Sawatzke made the motion, Graham Brayshaw seconded, with all voting aye.

Respectfully Submitted,

Beth S. Thompson
State Veterinarian
Executive Director