

Sheep & Goat HEALTH REPORT

A National Institute for Animal Agriculture Publication

Fall/Winter 2006

How Is It Doing?

Scrapie Program at Mid-point of 10-year Goal

When the accelerated National Scrapie Eradication Program (NSEP) was launched in September of 2001, the stated goals were to eliminate outbreaks of scrapie by 2010 and to have the United States officially declared scrapie free by international standards by 2017.

Where are we at the mid-point of the 10-year goal of eliminating scrapie outbreaks? And, what is left to be done?

"The short answers are 'We're on schedule to achieve the 10-year goal' and 'There is still a lot of work to do,'" states Dr. Diane L. Sutton, NSEP coordinator which is administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's

(USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service/ Veterinary Services (APHIS/VS.)

As expected, the number of cases of scrapie increased during the first years of the program because of greater surveillance efforts, but they now seemed to have peaked and may be starting to decline, although it may take another year or two to be certain of that trend, according to Dr. Sutton.

"More importantly, since the initiation of slaughter surveillance we have seen a 50 percent decline in the percentage of black face sheep found positive at slaughter which is our best indicator of changes in scrapie prevalence. The vast majority of the positive sheep have been black face or black face crosses; however, cases have been seen in many of the white face and hair sheep breeds," says Dr. Sutton. The following is a summary of key elements of the NSEP:

*Identification and records are necessary in any eradication program to successfully locate infected flocks and trace exposed animals. NSEP has a functioning individual animal identification system with about 50% of producers applying tags provided directly to them by USDA and a significant percentage of the remaining sheep and goats being identified at livestock markets.

"However, we need to increase ID compliance and recordkeeping to as near 100% as possible," notes Dr. Sutton. "A major goal of the next five years."

*In 2003 another key component of an eradication program, the

Regulatory Scrapie Slaughter Surveillance (RSSS), began. It is a targeted slaughter surveillance program which is designed to identify infected flocks for clean-up. According to Dr. Sutton, since 2003, samples have been collected from 106,376 sheep from 110 establishments. There have been 286 confirmed positive sheep since the beginning of RSSS.

"The major challenges for the RSSS program over the next five years are to increase the number of animals being sampled and to insure that all areas of the country are being adequately surveyed by establishing collections at additional sites," says Dr. Sutton

*While the NSEP is a federal program, the states are essential partners in the effort. To be "consistent" each state was to have had its own scrapie control program that met or exceeded federal standards. At the end of FY 2006 (the federal government's fiscal year runs from October 1 to September 30), 47 states had approved programs and are considered "consistent." "Regulatory action is underway to remove the remaining three states, Vermont, Rhode Island, and Maine, from consistent state status," says Dr. Sutton.

*While the total number of flocks/herds involved is relatively small (just over 2,000), another important part of the NSEP is the Scrapie Flock Certification Program (SFCP), which was up and running when the NSEP was launched in 2001. Its role is to provide a source of breed-

See *Scrapie Program* | page 6

Inside This Issue...

PAGE 2-3
Surveillance, Wildlife Diseases
High on Agenda at Animal Health
Meetings

PAGE 4
USDA Holds Firm to Voluntary
NAIS, Other Policies

PAGES 5
Only Smart Use Will Preserve
Drugs' Effectiveness Until New
Methods Can Be Developed

PAGE 6-7
News Briefs

PAGE 8
RFID Tags Work in Sheep

Hot Topics

Surveillance, Wildlife Diseases High on Agenda at Animal Health Meetings

The U.S. Animal Health Association (USAHA) and the American Association of Veterinary Laboratory Diagnosticians (AAVLD) recently held their annual joint meeting in Minneapolis (October 12-18). USAHA is mainly an organization for state and federal government animal health officials (both scientists and administrators) with representation from various trade associations and professional societies. AAVLD is just what the name implies - an organization comprised of diagnosticians. The joint USAHA/AAVLD meeting often serves as an important venue for discussion regarding emerging issues surrounding animal disease and as a forum to begin resolving various issues of concern.

Two prevailing topics dominated this year's meeting: 1) Disease "sur-

veillance" based on predictive models measuring prevalence and subsequent threat of these diseases to the total domestic herd/flock and to humans; 2) Zoonotic diseases in wildlife that affect domestic animals and possibly even humans. AAVLD committee meetings often surround diagnostic issues and techniques; meanwhile, USAHA committees primarily deal with disease control policy.

Here are some of the highlights of the presentations and discussions:

Surveillance:

Surveillance has been an essential part of every effort to eradicate a given animal disease. But, surveillance in the 21st century is a far cry from not only your grandpa's surveillance of 50 years ago but also your dad's of just 15 years ago. And this is just the beginning. Surveillance techniques are likely to grow and expand even more in the next 20 years according to some of the speakers at the USAHA/AAVLD meeting.

This rapid change has been driven by two factors: the threat of foreign animal diseases and the expansion of information technology capabilities that make it possible to collect, transmit and analyze an amazing amount of data.

Recognizing the ever-increasing disease threats and opportunities to expand export markets, the USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service/Veterinary Service (APHIS, VS), working with the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture (NASDA), began a review of the U.S. animal disease surveillance system. In addition to the 9/11 events the occurrence of bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) and the global risk of foreign animal and emerging diseases spurred those efforts into high gear and as a result, the National Animal Health Surveillance System

(NAHSS) was created in 2003. The NAHSS is a network of alliances and partnerships among government agencies and private entities designed to facilitate information exchange, enhance current surveillance programs, and establish and maintain the necessary infrastructure for surveillance.

"The NAHSS is a USDA, APHIS, VS initiative to integrate existing animal health monitoring programs and surveillance activities into a comprehensive and coordinated system, as well as to develop new surveillance methods and approaches," according to Dr. Brian McCluskey, USDA Centers for Epidemiology and Animal Health (CEAH), who spoke at the Scientific Session of the joint meeting. Dr. McCluskey leads the National Surveillance Unit (NSU), the coordinating entity for animal health surveillance activities.

The goal of the NAHSS, says Dr. McCluskey, is to systematically collect, collate, and analyze animal health data and promptly disseminate animal health information, especially to those partners obligated to respond: other federal agencies including the Department of Homeland Security, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (for humans) and others such as State Veterinarians and USDA scientists in the field.

Surveillance, Dr. McCluskey says, depends upon many interrelated activities including sampling at slaughter and marketing facilities and reports by veterinarians and other animal health professionals in the field. "That's where the readers of the Health Reports come in. We need their first-hand knowledge of what's going on out there on the farms, ranches, and production facilities to make surveillance work. They've been great partners in the past and we hope



Sheep & Goat Health Report

Fall/Winter 2006

Sheep & Goat Health Report provides the latest information on issues pertinent to sheep & goat health initiatives, strategies, research and regulatory action. It is a communications initiative of the NIAA Sheep & Goat Health Committee and is produced in cooperation with USDA-APHIS. Reprinting is encouraged.

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that will continue," he says.

Dr. McCluskey noted a number of "successes" that have been achieved by the NAHSS including the incorporation of the National Animal Health Laboratory Network (NAHLN), which was created through the cooperation of the AAVLD, APHIS, and the Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service. This network combines federal laboratory capacity with the facilities, professional expertise, and support of state and university animal health laboratories, enhancing the detection and response for animal health emergencies, including foreign animal diseases.

In addition, guidelines and standards for the construction and operation of surveillance systems have been created, as well as surveillance plans for BSE, classical swine fever, and new targeted methods for pseudorabies and brucellosis. For more information go to the NSU website: <http://nsu.aphis.usda.gov/>. For more information on how NSU/NAHSS fits with the work at USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) and the broader scope Bio-surveillance at the Department of Homeland Security see other presentations made at the meeting at www.usaha.org.

Wildlife:

The fact that wildlife and domestic livestock and fowl can and do spread diseases to each other has resulted in government and industry eradication programs for such diseases as tuberculosis (TB) in cattle and pseudorabies in swine. Some of these diseases, such as TB, posed a human threat as well and fueled the need for eradication programs. But with the emergence of BSE/Mad Cow disease some years ago, and now with the extensive news coverage of a possible avian influenza (AI) H5N1 pandemic, even the general

public is keenly aware of the overall problem of diseases spreading not only from wildlife to domestic animals but also to other species including humans. While these two high profile diseases grab most of the attention, a number of others issues, such as TB being transmitted from deer and bison to domestic cattle in Michigan and Wyoming and pseudorabies in wild boars threatening to re-infect the nation's swine herd, must be dealt with by animal health officials and the industry.

Another example, with a reverse twist, is the following: some wildlife officials theorize that Bighorn sheep in the Rocky Mountains are being infected with various diseases by way of domestic sheep grazing on public land. Therefore, there is a movement to ban domestic sheep from federally-owned public grazing land which would make sheep production impossible in many western states.

Numerous presentations, papers, and committee agenda items focused on these and other diseases, but of course, avian flu got by far the most attention at the USAHA-AAVLD meeting. For example, Robert Cook, of the Wildlife Conservation Society,

described his organization's Global Avian Influenza Network (GAIN) for surveillance of wild birds. The goal of GAIN is not to duplicate efforts of countries such as the U.S. but to work in less developed nations where the governments have neither the resources nor the expertise to monitor the spread of the disease.

In addition, two half-day sessions, one on various diagnostic tests for AI and the other covering more general information on its spread and control methods, were held. More than a dozen scholarly presentations were given while committees spent hours discussing what needs to be done and making several resolutions regarding AI.

And, these are just today's high profile diseases. Literally hundreds of papers and studies on everything from foot and mouth disease in pronghorn and mule deer to canine distemper to diseases of skunks and squirrels were presented and made available to attendees.

In addition to the USAHA website listed before, much more information on assorted aspects of wildlife diseases is also available at www.aavld.org. ●

Mark Your Calendars for April 2-5, 2007!

SACRAMENTO TO HOST 2007 NIAA ANNUAL MEETING

BioFuels Energy: Animal Agriculture at the Crossroads—That's the theme of the 2007 National Institute for Animal Agriculture's annual meeting which will be held April 2-5 at the Hyatt Regency Sacramento.

"BioFuels are taking off," says Annual Meeting Chair Jim Fraley. "Is that generally good for animal agriculture, or frankly, will it drive up our feed costs? Can we pass those costs on to consumers? These are questions everyone in animal agriculture is asking

him/herself, and we'll try to answer them in Sacramento this spring," he says.

As usual the planning committee has scheduled an extra, one-day symposium on the 5th (Thursday) with a special "hot topic" emphasis. This one is expected to be based on the recent outbreak of E. coli. The program will feature local accounts and experts. "And, what better place to do it, but in the capital of the state where the problem originated. It should be both fascinating and informative," Fraley adds.

USDA Holds Firm to Voluntary NAIS, Other Policies

Secretary of Agriculture Mike Johanns has some clear ideas about how the National Animal Identification System (NAIS) should work. During his address at the ID•INFO/EXPO 2006 in August, Johanns shared these thoughts, outlining what he believes is the best approach for the program: 1) NAIS is a voluntary system driven by the States and the private sector; 2) NAIS is a State-Federal-Industry partnership that allows for competitive forces in the free market to keep costs down; and 3) The Federal government does not control animal identification or movement records.

These same messages were reiterated by other U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) officials throughout ID•INFO/EXPO and again at the U.S. Animal Health Association's annual meeting in Minneapolis in mid-October. They were also key points in USDA's launch of the NAIS Community Outreach Program two weeks later at a workshop in Kansas City for State/Federal Animal ID coordinators and industry representatives.

Johanns and staff emphasized that the goals of NAIS can be achieved with a voluntary system, but still acknowledged the challenges a voluntary program can bring. They stressed the importance of educating producers about the value of NAIS and motivating them to participate in the program. A key part of this effort, they said, is listening to producer concerns and taking action to address them. USDA's decision to house animal movement records in private and State databases was in keeping with this approach.

NOTE: There is currently a mandatory ID and recordkeeping program for sheep and goats as part of the Scrapie Eradication Program. The Scrapie Program requires official identification of most breeding sheep and many breeding goats and all sheep over 18 months of age.

USDA officials pledged to continue collaborating on NAIS with the States, industry, and producers to create a versatile, quality system. Through the new outreach campaign, USDA is working together with its State and industry partners to seek feedback on the program and ensure that NAIS makes sense for everyone.

As part of these efforts, USDA has recently published a draft NAIS User Guide at <http://animalid.aphis.usda.gov/nais/naislibrary/userguide.shtml>. The Guide provides helpful information about what NAIS is and how it can help protect producers' animals and their investment. The Guide is intended as a resource to help producers make informed decisions about participation in NAIS. USDA is also accepting comments on the Guide through January 22, 2007, to gain producers' insights on the program.

There are three components of NAIS: premises registration, animal identification, and animal tracing. The first priority of NAIS has been implementing premises registration – the foundation of the program. USDA and the States are close to their goal of registering 25 percent of premises in the United States (estimated to be at least 1.4 million) by January 31, 2007. The number of premises registered across the country stands today at more than 333,000, or 24 percent, and continues to rise each week.

The second component of NAIS, identifying animals individually or by group/lot with a unique identification number, is progressing. Animal identification is available now for several species. The States and industry continue working on this component so that it will eventually be an option for all species. In support of this work, USDA has approved two companies to manufacture animal identification number (AIN) devices, and a third has submitted devices for approval. USDA is also in the process of approving AIN managers

who will be authorized to distribute devices. Another recent change is USDA's plan for the distribution records of AIN devices to be submitted to private- or State-operated AIN Device Distribution Databases, rather than to USDA's AIN Management System. Animal health officials will request access to the AIN device distribution records only when there is an animal disease issue that warrants their use. This change is slated for implementation in April 2007.

The final component of NAIS, animal tracing, is under development by the States and private sector. Once this component is complete, producers will be able to choose an animal tracking database (ATD)—operated and maintained by private industry groups or States—and report certain animal movements. In the case of an animal health emergency, these databases will be accessible by animal health officials through a "communications system" called the Animal Trace Processing System (ATPS). ATDs are currently being approved on an interim basis and agreements signed relative to their operation.

Johanns and staff remained firm on their position that the Federal government should maintain only limited NAIS information, and that the AIN Device Distribution Databases and ATDs should be operated privately and/or by State governments to ensure the protection of information. As NAIS moves forward, USDA is demonstrating a strong commitment to producers by ensuring that the program continues to evolve to meet their needs.

The Species Working Groups (EG) reported on their current recommendations at ID INFO EXPO. They are similar to reports made to the National Animal Identification System Subcommittee of the Secretary's Advisory Committee on Foreign Animal and Poultry Disease. The following are major points reported by the Sheep and

Drug Resistance Problems in Parasite Control

Only Smart Use Will Preserve Drugs' Effectiveness Until New Methods Can Be Developed

The number one parasite problem for sheep and goat producers in the Southeast is the "barber pole worm" (*Haemonchus contortus*) which is a bloodsucking, anemia-causing nematode that thrives in warm, wet climates. The anemia presents itself in eye tissue, and the worms cause "Bottle Throat" in goats. As is the case with a number of other parasites in numerous species, these worms have developed a resistance to a number of anthelmintic drugs. The challenge, then, is to preserve the efficacy of the products that still work.

At the recent USAHA meeting, Dr. Seyedmehdia Mobini, a professor and Extension Veterinarian in the Veterinary Science Department at Fort Valley State University in Georgia, said, "This parasite is already resistant to albendazole and ivermectin in 90 percent of all farms tested in Georgia, and levamisole is only effective in 70 percent of farms. The one drug that does work, moxidectin, which is in the same family (macrocyclic lactones) of drugs ivermectin, has already exhibited resistance in both the United States and New Zealand. So it's important that we do everything we can to preserve its efficacy," he urged.

He suggested a two-pronged management program that includes how and when the drug is administered and various aspects of pasture management tools. "Resistance is caused by treating too often, under dosing, treating all animals at the same time and by moving treated sheep and goats to a clean pasture," Dr. Mobini explained.

Dr. Mobini urged producers to start by determine the resistance level of the worms in their flocks/herds. This can be done in two ways: The

"DrenchRite" laboratory test that runs about \$150 and requires only one test per farm from pooled fecal samples from about 10 animals. The other way is to have a veterinarian do a simple, on-farm fecal egg count reduction test.

"Smart drenching," he said, "starts by determining a dewormers efficacy, then reducing the frequency of treatment, using pasture management and stocking rate, keeping resistant worms off the farm, administering the proper dose and using oral treatment with a drench gun." He also recommends that animals be made to fast before getting two doses, 12 hours apart and that dosing may include two different drugs at the same time.

Another important aspect of a good deworming program is based on the fact that only 20-30 percent of the animals in a given flock/herd are highly infected with barber pole worm at the same time. If only the highly infected animals are treated, then that also reduces the chances for resistance to develop.

"The best way to determine which animals are infected with this worm is the FAMACHA® method which is a patented process developed in South Africa to overcome a severe drug resistance problem. Because these worms cause anemia, the extent of the infestation is correlated to the color of the eye tissue. The FAMACHA® system has a color chart that matches

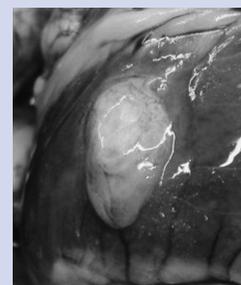
various stages of severity of anemia, and thus provides a guide for selective treatment of animals based on the level of infestation," he explained.

The long term solution to the drug resistance problem, according to Dr. Mobini, is not new drugs. "They're too expensive to develop at \$200 million per drug. Currently research into drug alternatives include finding fungi that kills nematodes, condensed tannins, copper-wire bolus and even vaccines. Another interesting possibility is protein supplements that may control this worm."

For information on the FAMACHA® color chart send an e-mail to famacha@vet.uga.edu, or find out more about it and other information by going to www.scrspc.org. To view all of Dr. Mobini's presentation at the USAHA meeting go to www.usaha.org. ●

Tapeworms in Sheep

Another parasite problem in sheep is a tapeworm (*Taenia hydatigena*) which causes "sheep measles" according to Dr. Cleon Kimberling, newly retired from Colorado State University and still actively involved in the sheep industry there.



The "measles" aren't really like the ones in humans but are actually cysts caused by the larva.

This is a parasite that is best controlled by treating another host rather than sheep. What is the other host? Dogs! (Also coyotes, which are harder to treat.) Dr. Kimberling recommends treating guard and pet dogs around sheep with praziquantel two to four times a year. Dosage for large dogs is 170 mgs. Also, dogs and wild canines should not be allowed to feed on sheep carcasses.

ADGA Helps Fund Goat Milk Research Project

American Dairy Goat Association Research Foundation has allocated \$10,000 in funding as partial support for a dairy goat research project through California Cooperative Extension.

Carol Collar and her staff from the University of California Cooperative Extension in Kings County began the project in November to assess diagnostic tools for quality evaluation of bulk tank milk and for detection of sub-clinical mastitis in goats.

The purpose of the year long project is to investigate the ability of mastitis diagnostic tests to correctly classify goat udder health status and to assess the usefulness of these tests for milk quality evaluation of bulk milk tank from commercial goat dairies.

News Briefs News Briefs News Briefs

UM&R for NSEP in Revision

While there are only relatively minor changes to be made, according to the Dr. Diane Sutton, coordinator for the National Scrapie Eradication Program (NSEP), the Uniform Methods and Rule (UM&R) document of the NSEP is in the process of being revised. Anyone with specific suggestions or questions can contact Dr. Sutton at 301-734-6954 or diane.l.sutton@aphis.usda.gov.

Scrapie Vaccine?

Scientists working with mice have developed a vaccine that may delay the onset of scrapie and chronic wasting disease in deer and elk. These very preliminary results were reported at the 2006 USAHA meeting from work being done by USDA-APHIS-National Wildlife Research Center, Fort Collins, CO. This is just the first step in a long process, and there is no guarantee that it will work in sheep and/or goats.

New B-ovis Test Working

A year ago the standard test for *Brucella ovis*, commonly known as B-ovis, was found to be no longer reliable, producing many false positive results. In the meantime, the USDA's National Veterinary Services Laboratories in Ames, IA, has located a new reagent from France that not only seems to be producing reliable results but also meets international standards.

Scrapie Research in Goats

The Animal Disease Research Unit of the USDA's Agriculture Research Service (ARS) is working in several areas relating to goat scrapie. One such area is development of a rectal test for the disease which would replace the third eyelid test which is the currently the only live animal test for scrapie and is sometimes difficult to do. Other research is working to determine whether scrapie in goats is always the same as sheep scrapie or if a unique "goat scrapie" exists. A third area concerns how susceptible goats are to oral exposure to the disease. Both of the latter areas of research are in the early stages and will take some time to determine definitive results.

Scrapie Program (cont'd from page 1)

ing stock that is certified scrapie free. "The SFCP is expected to continue to be a key method for certifying animals for export until we establish that scrapie has been completely eradicated," explains Dr. Sutton.

*Genotyping is another tool that producers, state governments, and the USDA have used successfully in the effort to eradicate scrapie. In 2003, APHIS expanded the use of genotyping for cleaning up infected and source flocks. At this point, several hundred flocks have utilized this important tool. In addition, many states have set up various genotyping programs on their own and, through cooperative programs funded in part by the federal government, have greatly added to the number of scrapie resistant rams used in the nation's

flock.

*A major challenge in the next five years is getting a handle on scrapie in goats. There have been only 18 cases of scrapie found in the nation's goat herd since 1990. Scrapie infection in goats is most often the result of exposure to infected sheep; however, an infected goat can spread the disease to other goats and could potentially be a reservoir of scrapie if it is not detected and eradicated. Also, unlike sheep, no useful genetic resistance markers have been found for goats. "To eradicate scrapie, both species must be included in the program," explains Dr. Sutton. "The plan is to increase our monitoring in goats in FY 2007 to determine if scrapie is spreading in goats," says Dr. Sutton. ●

USDA Releases '05 U.S. Animal Health Report

The USDA released in October the 2005 U.S. Animal Health Report, a national overview.

The report addresses the many components of the U.S. animal health infrastructure, animal population demographics, approaches to foreign animal disease surveillance, and new initiatives.

The 2005 U.S. Animal Health Report is available on the APHIS website at http://www.aphis.usda.gov/publications/animal_health/content/printable_version/2005_us_animal_health_report.pdf

News Briefs News Briefs News Briefs News Briefs News Briefs

Drs. Reed and McElwain Receive APHIS Animal Health Award

Dr. Willie Reed and Dr. Terry McElwain were presented with the APHIS Animal Health Award by Dr. Ron DeHaven, Administrator of USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), during the opening joint general session of the United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) and the American Association of Veterinary Laboratory Diagnosticians (AAVLD).

In presenting the awards, DeHaven noted that both recipients have served as president of AAVLD, Reed in 2003 and McElwain in 2004. "Both of these men are passionate about veterinary diagnostics," DeHaven said, "and each will take every opportunity to share their vision with anyone who will listen."

Reed recently accepted the position of Dean of the College of Veterinary Medicine at Purdue University. Prior to that he was Director of the Animal Health Diagnostic Laboratory at Michigan State University as well as Chair of the Department of Pathobiology and Diagnostic Investigation there.

McElwain is Executive Director of the Washington Animal Disease Diagnostic Laboratory. He is a Diplomate of the American College of Veterinary Pathologists and holds an academic appointment as full Professor of Pathology in the Department of Veterinary Microbiology and Pathology at Washington State University.

"The dedication, pride and integrity that Dr. Reed and Dr. McElwain demonstrate every day reflect positively on the activities they direct and on their states, AAVLD, USAHA and animal agri-

culture in this country," DeHaven said.

'Medal of Distinction' Awarded to Dr. Campbell and Dr. McCapes

Dr. Clarence Campbell and Dr. Dick McCapes were the first recipients of the new U.S. Animal Health Association's "Medal of Distinction," the highest award presented to an Association member.

"These two individuals are highly deserving of this award," said Dr. Bret Marsh, USAHA president, as he presented the medals. Marsh said the new medal, which was established in May will be awarded annually to recognize one or more USAHA members who have demonstrated outstanding leadership, provided exemplary service, and have made significant contributions to the advancement of the Association.

Campbell retired as Florida State Veterinarian in 1991 after 38 years of service. McCapes retired from the faculty of the School of Veterinary Medicine, University of California at Davis, in 1994.

Both individuals served as president of USAHA — Campbell in 1966 and McCapes in 1999.

National Assembly Award Presented to Dr. Holland

Dr. Sam Holland, South Dakota State Veterinarian, was honored the National Assembly's Award by state regulatory officials during the opening joint general session of the U.S. Animal Health Association (USAHA) and the American Association of Veterinary Laboratory Diagnosticians (AAVLD) at their joint meeting in Minneapolis in October. ●

Progress Towards Use of CIDRs for Small Ruminants Being Made

There have been a number of projects for U.S. approval of Eazi Breed CIDRs for small ruminants ongoing for several years (under the NRSP-7 minor species drug approval program), and approval for sheep is moving forward. The technical sections are completed for effectiveness, target animal safety (that study was conducted at UC Davis) and environmental safety.

The human safety study is still under review. Once that is accepted, the Public Master File will appear as a Federal Register announcement of availability of data. Then Pfizer, the drug's manufacturer, will need to submit a request for approval and legal marketing.

"We of course have strong interest in pursuing a goat label for CIDRs,

but purposely did not start the goat work at the same time as the sheep work because we were waiting for the lactating cow approval on the bovine CIDRs," states Linda Campbell, Government & International Liaison Chair for the American Dairy Goat Association (ADGA). "Our reasoning here is that we would like to have lactating goats included, but that would be difficult to achieve without approval for lactating cows.

"As for goats specifically, the target animal safety data has been collected and report is pending and the efficacy and human safety study designs are in development," says Ms. Campbell.

ADGA Foundation may provide funding for some of the human safety work or other projects. ●

USDA Holds Firm (cont'd from page 4)

Goat Working Groups for direction and implementation of NAIS:

Sheep:

Dr. Cindy Wolf, Working Group Co-chair, University of Minnesota, and a sheep producer, reported the following recommendations:

*Tie the current flock ID number from the National Scrapie Eradication Program (NSEP) ID system to the NAIS premises ID number in the computer database(s) only.

*Individual ID and movement recording be required only when sheep are commingled while moving in commerce, exhibited, or when the sheep are breeding stock being sold or culled.

*Group ID should be used for lambs in feeding channels.

*Group ID should be used for sheep moving intra- and interstate for management purposes without change of ownership.

*Tracking should be required reporting only with change of ownership, inter-

state movement and when multiple owners commingle their animals.

*The sheep industry should recognize that exhibitions are currently a high-risk activity of disease transmission. Such events should immediately begin enforcing compliance regulatory ID and tracking (Certificates of Veterinary Inspection) as required by the NSEP.

*Continue with current NSEP numbering system for all tags for sheep and goats inclusive of RFID tags. Number systems changes should only be made if and when NAIS becomes mandatory.

*The SWG opposes the 15-digit 840 numbering system because being designed for electronic reading, it potentially makes visual reading of scrapie tags more error-prone and it duplicates the capability of the current NSEP ID system. Also, when electronic ID and tracking technology is proven to work in the sheep industry, it must also be economically feasible.

*The SWG requests that the USDA conduct an economic analysis of costs/benefits of electronic ID methods and tracking for the sheep industry.

Goats:

Goat Working Group (GWG) chair

Linda Campbell, a goat producer from Luray, VA, noted the great diversity in the goat industry in terms of breeds, use, and kinds of operations, and reported the following recommendations:

*Continued use of the NSEP ID system.

*Conduct field trials to fully test ID systems with various breeds and herd management programs.

*Requested that USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service specify a site for EIDs, with the industry preference being a tail location.

*Provide approved devices to producers

*Allow group ID when applicable.

*Utilize existing methods of collecting and reporting movement information during the initial phase of NAIS including CVIs and existing requirements of the NSEP.

These recommendations were accepted as an interim report by the Secretary of Agriculture's Advisory Committee on Foreign Animal and Poultry Diseases in September. In the meantime, the GWG is working on what events should be considered high-risk in terms of disease transmission and movement reporting for goats. ●

**Sheep & Goat
Health Report**
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RFID Tags Work in Sheep

... but can not be read consistently at the speed of commerce with current technology are the key findings of a study conducted by Dr. Cindy Wolf, University of Minnesota and a sheep producer, and her associate Eileen Kuhlman. Dr. Wolf and Ms. Kuhlman's work with Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) tags and supporting electronic equipment system demonstrates how the system can be expanded well beyond "official ID" requirements National Scrapie Eradication Program and/or the National

Animal Identification System to be a management tool for many aspects of production. At a demonstration immediately following the USAHA/AAVLD meeting in Minneapolis, Dr. Wolf showed how the equipment works to record and store weight data accurately and efficiently. "You can do any other management function—such as vaccinating, sorting, etc.—simultaneously," she explains. The research was conducted as part of a Cooperative Agreement project with USDA, APHIS.