



INDUSTRY NEWS

By David Meeker, APPI President

March 22, 2007

CURRENT ASSOCIATION ISSUES

Assessing Animal ID Systems

Renderers were well represented at the initial Seminar for “Assessing the Impact of the National Animal Identification System (NAIS) With Regard To Beef, Pork and Lamb Harvesting And Rendering Facilities In The United States.” NRA officers Dave Kaluzny and Mike Reiser were there, along with Ross Hamilton and David Meeker. The focus of this meeting was the collection, archiving and transfer (to State and/or Federal Animal Health officials) of animal termination records. This was part of a USDA funded research project conducted by Colorado State University.

Minimal Risk Rule for Canadian Cattle Over 30 Months

This proposed rule to allow imports from Canada under certain conditions was published on January 9. NRA provided comments that the requirements for collecting blood for blood meal feed are unnecessarily restrictive and would damage trade in this much needed and valuable feed ingredient. The comments are available on the APPI website:

http://www.animalprotein.org/new/whatsnew_frm.htm

Code of Practice Tally

So far, 36 plants have been certified. The list is maintained on the APPI website:

<http://www.animalprotein.org/>

Spring Meetings

The NRA will be conducting its annual spring meetings at the Drake Hotel in Chicago, Illinois April 24 – 27. Reservation information attached. FPRF will be meeting April 24 – 26, 2007. The APPI committee membership meeting will be Thursday, April 26 from 1:30 – 3:30 pm.

REGULATION

More Pressure to do HACCP or HACCP-Like Programs

FDA has published a draft final guidance document aimed at preventing microbial contamination during the processing of fresh-cut fruits and vegetables. The action came as state and federal agencies seek to tighten food safety practices for fresh, ready-to-eat products in the wake of recent outbreaks of illness caused by Escherichia coli O157:H7 on spinach and lettuce. The

guidance document suggests that fresh-cut processors “consider a Hazard Analysis & Critical Control Points (HACCP) system” HACCP systems have been mandatory for the meat industry for many years. The guide also recommends that processors encourage the adoption of safe practices by others throughout the supply chain.

FDA Pandemic Flu Plan Includes Food and Feed Impact

The FDA’s Pandemic Influenza Preparedness Strategic Plan unveiled recently includes a food and feed safety component as one of its key elements. Despite the fact that national and international public health authorities believe that human consumption of properly cooked or prepared food poses no risk of acquiring avian influenza, FDA expressed concern as to whether the virus presents a risk to human food or animal feed because of the use of avian-derived ingredients. The objectives included in the food and feed section are:

- To conduct an assessment of the likelihood of food and feed contamination with highly pathogenic avian and human pandemic influenza viruses.
- To identify FDA-regulated foods (including dietary supplements) and animal feeds that are at elevated risk of contamination with infectious avian or pandemic influenza virus.
- To investigate the effectiveness of food and feed processing and preparation practices for deactivating influenza viruses.

A copy of the strategic plan is available at www.fda.gov/oc/op/pandemic/strategicplan03_07.html.

CFIA Launches Campaign to Explain SRM Initiative

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency is launching a communications campaign to raise awareness of new safeguards intended to accelerate the elimination of bovine spongiform encephalopathy from Canadian cattle. Beginning July 12, specified risk materials for the disease will be banned from all animal feeds, pet foods and fertilizers in order to avoid the risk of inadvertent cross-contamination of feed on farms and ranches, among other objectives. As a result, new requirements will be in place for anyone handling, transporting or disposing of SRMs, including producers, processors and renderers, as well as fertilizer, pet food and feed manufacturers. Booklets, brochures and posters are being distributed to individuals, groups and organizations. Public notices are appearing in agricultural publications and community newspapers across Canada. The CFIA is also hosting technical workshops for regulated parties.

USDA Vows to Boost Avian Flu Prevention Efforts

The USDA said it would step up its anti-smuggling efforts and monitoring of live bird markets this year to protect the country from H5N1 avian influenza. The agency plans to more than double the number of special operations to seize banned poultry products and will expand the monitoring of live bird markets. They also announced a renewal of last year’s hunt for the H5N1 virus in wild birds throughout the U.S., among other steps. The deadly virus was not found in any of the more than 100,000 wild bird samples tested last year. U.S. agencies also aim to increase collaboration with Canadian and Mexican authorities on wild-bird surveillance this year. Officials also announced completion of a 7-year study of avian flu in waterfowl in Alaska, where Asian and North American birds mingle in summer. Scientists took 8,254 samples and concluded that the risk of introduction of the deadly H5N1 virus in Alaska is “relatively low.” Dr. Ron DeHaven said all 45 labs in the National Animal Health Laboratory Network are trained to use a recently developed test that can return a result in 3 hours, as compared with up to 2 weeks for previous tests.

OTHER ISSUES

“Bushmeats” Smuggled into U.S.

U.S. health officials in Washington say exotic meats smuggled into the United States from Central Africa could result in a public health crisis. Jennifer McQuiston, a veterinarian at the Centers for Disease Control’s Division of Global Migration and Quarantine, said the “bushmeats,” which include meat from cane rats, monkeys and bats, can carry diseases like monkeypox, Ebola , and tuberculosis.

Rare Form of Sheep Scrapie Found

The Wyoming Livestock Board says a sheep from a flock in the northeastern corner of the state has tested positive for a rare form of the disease scrapie, the first time the particular strain has been found in the U.S. USDA/APHIS tested the ewe positive for the Nor98 strain, first diagnosed in Norway in 1998. The ewe was slaughtered in Michigan as part of the USDA’s regular scrapie slaughter surveillance program and traced back to the Wyoming flock. The release states that the Nor98 strain of scrapie is rare even in Europe, with fewer than 300 cases diagnosed since it was identified in 1998.

Pork Exports More Robust Than Ever

Pork exports got off to a blistering start for 2007. January pork exports were up 20.8% from one year ago. Shipments to Japan were record large at over 105 million pounds carcass weight equivalent, an increase of nearly 43% from last year. Shipments to Russia, South Korea and Hong Kong/China grew by 44%, 35% and 72%, respectively, from their January 2006 levels.

Effects of Climate Change on Ag, Land Resources, Water Resources, and Biodiversity.

The USDA will establish a Federal Advisory Committee for the Expert Review of Synthesis and Assessment Product 4.3 (CERSAP) to provide advice to the Secretary of Agriculture on the conduct of a study titled, “The Effects of Climate Change on Agriculture, Land Resources, Water Resources, and Biodiversity,” to be conducted as part of the U.S. Climate Change Science Program. Committee membership will total approximately twelve persons and may include individuals from the Federal Government, State and/or local governments, the scientific community, non-governmental organizations and the private sector, with expertise, experience, and knowledge essential to the successful completion of the study.

A good reminder of proper use of statistics to show causality is the “**Bradford Hill’s criteria:**”

1. the demonstration of a strong association between the causative agent and the outcome,
2. consistency of the findings across research sites and methodologies,
3. the demonstration of specificity of the causative agent in terms of the outcomes it produces,
4. the demonstration of the appropriate temporal sequence, so that the causative agent occurs prior to the outcome,
5. the demonstration of a biological gradient, in which more of the causative agent leads to a poorer outcome,
6. the demonstration of a biologic rationale, such that it makes sense that the causative agent causes the outcome,
7. coherence of the findings, such that the causation argument is in agreement with what we already know,
8. experimental evidence, and
9. evidence from analogous conditions.

Aussies Discuss Using Camels for Pet Food

Researchers from around Australia met recently in Perth to discuss a plan to turn camels into pet food. At this meeting, camel experts will also work on a national management plan for the

animal. The project's leader said one million camels are competing with native wildlife for food and water. Researchers will discuss options for managing feral camels and how to engage with groups such as pastoralists and Indigenous people on the issue. The drought has made camels an even bigger threat to wildlife and remote livelihoods.

U.S. Seeks to Boost Aquaculture by Allowing Ocean Farms

The Bush administration wants to allow ocean farming for shellfish, salmon and saltwater species in federal waters for the first time. A plan recently announced Monday by Commerce Secretary Carlos Gutierrez would let companies operate fish farms three miles to 200 miles offshore, but without some of the rules on size, season and harvest methods that apply to other commercial fishermen. Fish farms already operate on inland and coastal waters as far as three miles into the ocean, which fall under state jurisdiction. Environmental concerns have arisen about wastewater generated by such operations. Gutierrez, however, said the administration's proposal had safeguards and would permit states to ban fish farming up to 12 miles off their coast.

Composting Recommended, Renderer Warn of Consequences

To avoid paying higher rendering costs, some Pennsylvania farmers are considering composting dead livestock on their farms. Penn State Cooperative Extension is encouraging composting even large cows over burial or illegal disposal. But a renderer warns that composting done incorrectly could spark a disease outbreak. "If you have avian influenza or foot-and-mouth disease, composting at a low temperature will not kill the bacteria," said J.J. Smith, president of the county's largest renderer, Valley Proteins. The story is here:

http://www.mycattle.com/markets/dsp_market_article.cfm?storyid=19853

New Twist in Tale of BSE's Beginnings

According to an article in NewScientist.com, when BSE emerged in British cattle in the mid-1980s, the leading theory was that they had initially contracted the disease by eating feed containing the remains of sheep infected with scrapie. Yet attempts to duplicate BSE by deliberately giving scrapie to cows have failed, and many countries included sheep remains in cattle feed without creating BSE. This has led some scientists to speculate that BSE arose as a rare spontaneous condition in cattle, which spread to other cows via feed. The new twist to the story comes from studies of a disease called bovine amyloidotic spongiform encephalopathy, or BASE. It was discovered in 2003, when two Italian cows, out of tens of thousands of European cattle screened for BSE at slaughter, were found to have a prion disease that seemed different from BSE. The BASE prion had a lower molecular weight and one, rather than two, sugars bound to it. The brains of cows with BASE were also damaged in different places from those with BSE, and had dense protein deposits called amyloid that are not seen in BSE. Similar prions have also turned up in France, Germany and Japan. The full article is here:

<http://www.newscientist.com/article/dn11395-new-twist-in-tale-of-bses-beginnings.html>

HSUS goes after last U.S. horse slaughter facility

After a massive campaign that closed two horse slaughter facilities in Texas, the Humane Society of the U.S. (HSUS) hopes to shut down the last remaining U.S. facility. The group filed a 60-day notice of intent to sue the Cavel International horse slaughterhouse in DeKalb, IL. for repeatedly violating the federal Clean Water Act. The notice, required under federal law before a lawsuit can be filed, alleges that Cavel International has violated the terms of its wastewater discharge permit numerous times during the last two years. In addition, the HSUS continues to lobby for the American Horse Slaughter Prevention Act, H.R. 503/S. 311, a measure that would ban the slaughter of American horses nationwide.

United States Cattlemen's Association

Just weeks after R-CALF fired president Chuck Kiker, several ex-Leaders of R-CALF formed a new group called the United States Cattlemen's Association (USCA). Top-level resignations from the R-CALF organization included co-founder Dennis McDonald and 15 committee chairs who will be taking up similar positions within the USCA. The new entity has been legally set up and has just completed writing its by-laws. Several affiliated groups, including the Independent Cattlemen's Association of Texas, dropped its affiliation with R-CALF. Story: <http://www.lexingtonleader.com/life.shtml>

Trucker Education BSE Video

"Preventing the Spread of BSE" – The 11-minute video was designed for trucker awareness of the need to clean out their trucks when carrying prohibited materials. You can now download the video directly from this website: <http://www.fda.gov/cvm/bseOtherInfo.htm>

The Center for Food Integrity

A group of farm and food industry organizations launched this new entity to increase consumer trust and understanding of the contemporary food system. The Center for Food Integrity is a combination of The Grow America Project and Best Food Nation, two national initiatives established in 2006 to increase public understanding about the food system. The organization's primary mission is to engage with stakeholders, model practices that build trust with consumers, and share accurate, balanced information about the U.S. food system. In the next few months, The Center for Food Integrity will coordinate teams to provide strategic leadership for addressing five important issues: 1) health and nutrition; 2) food safety; 3) worker care; 4) environment, and; 5) food animal well being. The Center is supported by the American Egg Board, The American Farm Bureau Federation, Countrymark Cooperative, Elanco Animal Health, Fair Oaks Dairy Farm, Indiana Packers Corporation, Indiana State Department of Agriculture, Maple Leaf Farms, Monsanto, National Chicken Council, National Council of Chain Restaurants, National Milk Producers Federation, National Pork Board, National Pork Producers Council, National Restaurant Association, National Turkey Federation, Produce Marketing Association, Purdue University, United Egg Producers, and United Soybean Board. Website: www.foodintegrity.org

Large Pet Food Recall

A recall of over 90 brands of pet foods manufactured by one supplier has resulted in recalls of those brands with a small portion of those related to dog and cat illnesses and deaths. A complete list is here: www.fda.gov/cvm. Major media outlets are running nearly daily stories on this massive recall. Veterinary organizations are providing pet well-being announcements, such as those from the American Veterinary Medical Association here: www.avma.org.

Study on Distillers Dried Grains with Solubles

The American Feed Industry Association (AFIA) recently released the year-long study on distillers dried grains with solubles (DDGS) analytical methodologies and DDGS ingredient guidelines along with guidelines for condensed distiller solubles. For copies of these reports and recommendations, click here: http://www.afia.org/img/assets/1176/DDGS_.pdf