

**Animal Care
Council Report**

2012 NIAA Annual Conference

Wednesday, March 28, 2012



The Animal Care Council met on Wednesday, March 28, 2012 from 8:00 am to 11:30 am during the 2012 NIAA Annual Conference in Denver, Colorado with about 50 people present. Ms. Sherrie Niekamp & Mr. Jim Fraley served as Co-Chairs.

The committee session focused on the impacts of decreasing resources and increasing regulation on animal care and how to further advocate and advance animal agriculture. The following speakers presented relevant information pertaining to the meeting's theme:

Mr. Eric Boles, University of Arkansas, presented "Healthy Animals = Healthy Planet."

Discussed how everything in our world is connected. The world's population growth is growing exponentially and food will be a limiting factor for population growth. It is anticipated that the global population will reach 9.25 billion people in 2050. The World Wildlife Fund anticipates that food production will need to triple by 2050 to feed this increased population. Just as the population is rapidly increasing, the emergence of societal issues and solutions are occurring more rapidly as well. What we do in the next 10 years will shape the earth and humanity for the next 100 years. Described the concepts of life-cycle analyses and used milk production as an example of how this analysis is used to calculate carbon footprint and green-house gas emissions.

Dr. André Williamson, Vice President & Senior Consultant, Agralytica, presented "Cost of Increased Regulations on Animal Welfare to Producers and Consumers."

Presented the change in livestock agriculture production over the past 10 years and how that has influenced the economic impact of animal agriculture through income, earning, employment and income and property taxes. Export of agriculture products also has a huge impact on the economic impact of animal agriculture. The studies objective was to evaluate the cost of increased regulation on livestock production. The study focused on regulations on animal housing, environmental regulations, antimicrobial usage, labor issues/enforcement and livestock marketing rules. Case studies of the ban of sow stalls in the United Kingdom and ban of subtherapeutic antimicrobial use in Denmark and food safety data from other countries were used in the economic analysis. The conclusions were that regulations will increase consumer costs and reduce demands, jurisdictions that are early to adopt constraints show decline in production, production for the domestic market are unlikely to move overseas at least in the short term, the primary threat is to exports as we become the least cost efficient producers, and there is lack of concrete evidence that food safety would worsen.

Field Moms/ Presented by Jim Fraley, Illinois Farm Bureau, presented "Advancing Animal Agriculture — We're Talking But What Are They Hearing? Opening the Barn Door: An Experiment."

Conducted some consumer research to understand perceptions of consumers and how they want to receive information from animal agriculture. Video interviews of producers discussing their farms and farm practices were shown to consumers for their reactions to the people and their messages. Farmers Feed Us campaign to introduce consumers to producers. The Field Moms initiative selected 9 bloggers from northeast Illinois to tour farms throughout Illinois. Presented how this project will expand to other areas of the state in the future. This project has shown success in reaching its two intended audiences: moms and producers.

Dr. Glynn Tonsor, Kansas State University, presented “Benchmarking Industry Self-Perceptions Regarding Animal Welfare.”

Introduced the “beef and dairy cattle welfare : market opportunities and threats” project funded by USDA. To begin the benchmarking process for the study, questions about perceptions on animal care practices and consumer views and actions related to animal welfare.

Old Business:

None

New Business:

- No new resolutions proposed
- 1 existing resolution amended
 - Care of Newborn Dairy Calves – remove “*2008 Caring for Dairy Animals Reference Guide*” and replace with “*National Dairy FARM Animal Care Manual*”
- No action items presented

- Consensus Points for NIAA White Paper Development
 1. Case studies of the ban of sow stalls in the United Kingdom and ban of subtherapeutic antimicrobial use in Denmark and food safety data from other countries were used in the economic analysis. The conclusions were that regulations will increase consumer costs and reduce demands, jurisdictions that are early to adopt constraints show decline in production, production for the domestic market are unlikely to move overseas at least in the short term, the primary threat is to exports as we become the least cost efficient producers, and there is lack of concrete evidence that food safety would worsen.
 2. Consumers want to believe farmers care for the environment and have a high level of care for their livestock. A dialogue between farmers and consumers has to be cultivated.

General Discussion: None

Committee Session adjourned at 11:10.