

**Animal Health Emergency Management
Council Report**

2014 NIAA Annual Conference

Tuesday, April 1, 2014



The Animal Health Emergency Management Council met on Tuesday, April 1, 2014 from 2:00 to 5:30 p.m. during the 2014 NIAA Annual Conference in Omaha, Nebraska, with about 52 people present. Mr. Matt Cochran and Dr. Lindsey Holmstrom served as Co-Chairs.

The council session focused on the precautionary principle cast in the light of animal health risk assessments, updates on progress of the Secure Milk Supply Plan and FMD vaccination strategies, risk perception and cooperation in the event of an outbreak, and crisis communication strategies for both the domestic and international markets.

Thomas Kasari , DVM – Analytical Epidemiologist/Risk Assessment, Center for Epidemiology and Animal Health, USDA, APHIS, VS, STAS, presented “Relevance of Risk Analysis/Assessment to International Trade and the Precautionary Principle “

Stan Bruntz, DVM, MPH, Veterinary Epidemiologist, USDA, APHIS, VS presented on behalf of Dr. Kasari. Dr. Bruntz discussed the relevance of risk analysis and risk assessment to international trade. The World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) is the standard setting organization for animal trade and health, including harmonization, equivalence, regionalization/compartmentalization, transparency, and notification as related to animal diseases. Dr. Bruntz reviewed the guidelines provided by OIE on risk analysis. The importance of decisions be based on scientific evidence and the risk involved, and that risk analysis only provides input into decision-making but does not determine policy, was emphasized. Dr. Bruntz pointed out that the precautionary principle is tempered by risk analysis and must be used consistently. The different components that are part of a risk assessment were described, which includes a release assessment and pathways analysis, exposure assessment, consequence assessment, and risk estimation. Risk assessments can be either qualitative or quantitative, and the pros/cons and uses of each were explained.

James A. Roth, DVM – Director, Center for Food Security and Public Health and Executive Director, Institute for International Cooperation in Animal Biologics, Iowa State University , presented “FMD Vaccination: Preparedness, Availability, and Limitations”

Dr. Roth discussed the potential for foot and mouth disease (FMD) introduction into the US, the resulting impact, and response and control options. The US has had 9 previous FMD outbreaks, with the last outbreak occurring in 1929. All of these outbreaks were controlled by stopping animal movement and stamping out. Dr. Roth pointed out how changes in the US agriculture industry (e.g., large herd sizes, extensive mobility of animals and animal products), in addition to how the industry in the US operates, present unprecedented challenges and require different approaches to FMD response and control. Dr. Roth reviewed the tools available for FMD control, which include biosecurity, stop movement, stamping out, trace back/forward, rapid diagnostics, vaccination to kill/slaughter, and vaccination and to live. For vaccination, there is a North American FMD Vaccine Bank that stores vaccine antigen concentrate to be formulated into vaccine. The Bank is shared between the US, Canada and Mexico. Stocks are far below of what would be required to address and FMD outbreak in a single

livestock dense State or a large outbreak. With the recognition that we do not have enough vaccine, Dr. Roth presented the finding of a draft white paper that was prepared on FMD vaccine surge capacity for emergency use in the US. The main recommendations included the need for approaches to assure surge capacity for FMD vaccines, the need to secure funding to have vaccines and enable surge capacity, and the need of an advisory board of FMD vaccine experts and animal health experts to provide advice on vaccine stockpiling and use.

Pam Hullinger, DVM – Epidemiologist, Department of Medicine and Epidemiology, University of California Davis, presented “Secure Milk Supply: Current Challenges and Industry Opportunities”

Dr. Hullinger discussed how the control of FMD will vary within different US States/regions, which highlights the importance of many ongoing Secure Milk Supply (SMS) projects in different parts of the US. SMS partners include industry, state and federal government, and academia. SMS projects have resulted in many accomplishments to-date, including biosecurity recommendations, citric acid exemption to allow its use for inactivating FMD virus, baseline risk assessment, herd health monitoring, and development of training materials targeted for industry. Dr. Hullinger discussed challenges that remain for SMS and business continuity, which include managing large/long outbreaks (e.g., acceptable options for handling milk from infected farms; calf rearing, feed, manure management, cropping, etc.); the pre-certification process; information management and timely, scalable permitting; mitigation of risk in light of the rapidly growing dairy export market; and continued outreach and education. A white paper was developed by SMS partners to promote dialogue on handling milk on infected premises. Dr. Hullinger also presented on a pre-certification process concept that is currently being developed, using a California SMS example. The goal of the pre-certification is to make entities eligible to be permitted and premises can obtain different levels of certification.

Amy Delgado, DVM – Veterinary Epidemiologist, Center for Epidemiology and Animal Health, USDA, APHIS, VS, STAS, presented “Risk Perception, Disease Reporting, and Cooperation With Emergency Response – Foundations For Effective Risk Communication”

Dr. Delgado presented a thought provoking body of research on sociological aspects of animal disease control as relate to risk perception and regulatory compliance. She spoke about the importance and longevity of risk images that people associate with words and situations. Relating to the precautionary principle and risk perception, there is no one definition or finite measurement of risk- it is variable from person to person and situation to situation. Dr. Delgado also discussed the concept that trust is resilient while confidence is fragile. Another concept that was introduced was use of fear as a motivator. Fear works to a point, but excessive fear or hopelessness can quickly lead to inaction and paralysis. In conclusion, Dr. Delgado presented quantitative survey analyses of livestock producers’ responses to a variety of questions that had to do with disease response, trust of specific groups and institutions, risk perception and the potential for regulatory compliance.

Ms. Cindy Cunningham – Assistant Vice President of Communications, National Pork Board, presented “Crisis Preparedness and Management”

Ms. Cunningham presented two topics: 1) international crisis communication planning and 2) FMD vaccination communication and consumer perception. Specific to pork, the National Pork Board, National Pork Producer’s Council, U.S. Pork, and the US Meat Export Federation all play a role in export maintenance. In the event of an animal health crisis with international implications, all of these partners will execute a detailed communications plan within hours. The USMEF will work with in-transit product movement. In a crisis, these partners will message both domestic markets and trading partners as well. Regarding vaccination, consumer focus groups indicated that presentation of details about the

international landscape and scope of the crisis instills confidence with regard to messaging on disease and vaccination. Generally, in the most recent consumer communications research, people were more interested in being informed about disease and vaccination than anticipated; they were more interested in these facts than in a round of survey/focus group research that was performed a few years ago. Consumers think that if it's ok for their kids to receive vaccinations, that animal vaccination is ok as well. Regarding consumer perspective on the credibility of information sources, livestock groups ranked last in credibility with only 49% of those surveyed ranking them as credible.

Old Business: No old business was discussed

New Business:

- Two resolutions were amended and no resolutions were removed.
- Action item: Members were interested in receiving an update from NIAA, USAHA, and USDA on activities on forming a joint advisory group on FMD policy and preparedness (AHM6 Resolution).
- Consensus Points for NIAA White Paper Development
 - 1) Risk is not finite, and risk analysis (both qualitative and quantitative) plays a critical role in balancing science with use of the precautionary principle in the trade of animals and animal products
 - 2) Consumer perceptions and expectations are continually changing, and current research indicates that consumers want to know more details about a disease outbreak situation than before
 - 3) The Secure Food Supply plans and business continuity projects are important toward ensuring the protection of the US agricultural industries and sustaining their business.

General Discussion: None

Council Session adjourned at 6:00PM.