

Brucellosis Eradication Task Force Report

April 8, 2003

The task force met beginning at 1:15 PM April 8, 2003 in McKinley I and II in the Westin Hotel in Cincinnati, Ohio. There were 20 persons in attendance to participate in a six item seminar of timely topics followed by the business meeting. Barbara Martin, Microbiologist and Team Leader for Brucella and Mycobacterium Reagents at the National Veterinary Services Laboratory in Ames Iowa, provided an excellent explanation of the implications of Brucella being classified as an overlap agent. Included in her presentation were references to regulations and pertinent policies that impact those who handle, maintain, or ship overlap agents. A thorough understanding of those new requirements is crucial to those involved with Brucellosis diagnostic or research facilities.

Dr. Mike Gilsdorf provided the USDA perspective on the brucellosis program. Included was an overview of the changes being made in the UM&R that governs the eradication program and the status report of the Bovine Brucellosis Eradication Program. He included a brief presentation of budget information. He, also, addressed some of the changes to be expected once all states achieve 'Free' Status.

Dr. Sam Holland, South Dakota State Veterinarian, shared a thorough review of his experiences managing brucellosis infection in a very large, privately owned, chronically infected bison herd. This review highlighted the challenges as well as innovative attitude and persistence required to eliminate disease from this type of commercial operation.

Dr. Valerie Ragan Assistant Deputy Administrator, USDA, APHIS, Veterinary Services provided an update on actions being taken to manage the infected bison herd in Yellowstone National park. She detailed the current situation and provided an update on recent and planned activities designed to achieve elimination of brucellosis from the bison and elk in the greater Yellowstone area.

Dr. Tom Littlefield, Assistant State Veterinarian Montana provided a review of Montana's recent actions in the management of the infected Yellowstone bison herd and their efforts in support of the goal of elimination of brucellosis from the elk and bison in the Greater Yellowstone Area. An invitation was made for interested parties to participate in a major public meeting to be held in Jackson WY on April 24, 2003.

Dr. Valerie Ragan provided a most interesting and informative presentation of activities underway to bring a new national animal health surveillance system into existence. A description of existing systems was provided. She detailed the purpose and goals for the new system and described the process developed to create the new system. A description of initiatives under taken and planned activities was provided. The need for enhancement of agency resources and for achieving expanded partnerships was addressed. This excellent presentation provided a succinct view of a comprehensive surveillance system and how that is to be accomplished.

Dr. Chuck Massengill, Animal Health Epidemiologist with the Missouri department of Agriculture shared with the group his experience with the Fluorescence Polarization test in the brucellosis eradication program in Missouri. He found the test to be cost effective, highly stable, and reproducible over time and among numerous technicians. This test was found to be effective for disease detection in bison, cattle, swine, and cervids.

Review of resolutions and other business items followed. The task force adopted positions and resolutions have been submitted. It was the unanimous recommendation of the group that this Task Force be maintained. The meeting adjourned at 5:05 PM.

In attendance

NIAA Members:

Dr. Max Coats, Chair
Dr. Claude Barton, Vice Chair
Dr. Howard Lehmkuhl
Dr. Tom Linfield
Dr. Debbie Donch
Dr. Chuck Massengill
Dr. David Schmidt

Texas Animal Health Commission
Individual Member
National Animal Disease Center
Montana Department of Livestock
Michigan Department of Agriculture
Missouri Department of Agriculture
Iowa Department of Agriculture

Non-Members:

Dr. Robert Meyer
Dr. Barb Martin

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