



United States Department of Agriculture
Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

Sheep and Goat Sector
5th Quarterly Stakeholder Conference Call
Monday, June 7, 2021

Attendees: *Byron Rippke, Natalie Urie, Stephen White, Kim Lehman, Elizabeth Miller, Anita Dahnke, Randy Dusek, Erica Sanko, Amy Hendrickson, Peter Orwick, Jim Logan, Norma Tillman, Joan Dean Rowe, Cindy Wolf, Beth Johnson, Diane Sutton, Chuck Gaiser, Dianne Norden, Randy Pritchard, Stephanie Brault*

Welcome/Veterinary Services Update *Diane Sutton*

- Welcome to the 5th quarterly stakeholder call. The next stakeholder meeting will be the annual meeting tentatively planned for September (TBD).
- Summarized tags provided so far in FY 2021 under contracts to new producers and markets and dealers
 - So far in FY 2021 Shearwell has fulfilled 5484 contract orders from producers new to the program, shipping 465,689 plastic tags. This is a little bit behind of where we were last fiscal year at this time.
 - So far in FY 2021 National Band & Tag has fulfilled 223 contract orders, shipping a total of 490,300 metal tags. This is a little bit ahead of where we were last fiscal year at this time.
- All the FY 2021 cooperative agreements that we discussed on the last call have been executed. We have also decided to continue the AGF agreement on Safe Handling of Goats which is in process.
- Stephanie Brault provided update that two new RFID tags are approved for official use in sheep and goats. They are Allflex tags; one is a button tag, and the other is a button with a panel tag. These were tags that were previously approved in other species but have now been provided with official approval in sheep and goats. These will be available for ordering in about a month. There was a question about the size of the tags; these are tags that are suitable in size and weight for use in sheep and goats.
- Not presented at this meeting, provided here as later update: The Animal Care Tech Note "Research Involving Free-living Wild Animals in Their Natural Habitat," has been cleared and posted at

https://www.aphis.usda.gov/animal_welfare/downloads/tech-note-free-living-wild-animals.pdf. Its intention is to assist an Institutional Animal Use and Care Committee (IACUC) in determining whether an activity involving free-living wild animals in their natural habitat meets the regulatory definition of "field study."

Center for Veterinary Biologics Update *Byron Rippke*

- VS Memorandum 800.69 (autogenous biologics) revision is nearing completion. The three major areas of revision were extending time allowed for isolate usage from 24 months to 5 years, clarifying rules for international movement, and allowing third party distribution of autogenous vaccines under very specific circumstances. The finalization of this document was put on hold during the administration change, but hopefully will be signed this summer.
- Cindy Wolf reported that she had heard that Texas Vet Lab, Inc. is no longer selling their Caseous Lymphadenitis (CL) bacterin vaccine for goats. Randy Dusek confirmed that it is his understanding that the conditional license to produce the CL vaccine for goats by this company expired at the end of May and the company has decided to not renew the license. This means that there is no CL vaccine available OTC for goats in the U.S. and producers will need to pursue the autogenous vaccine route if they want to use a CL vaccine in goats. Byron Rippke noted that CVB is willing to help to ensure that a CL vaccine stays on the market for goats, and Randy Dusek will contact Byron to discuss.

Wildlife Services Update *Elizabeth Miller*

- Livestock Protection Dog Webinar
 - WS-NWRC is looking for a volunteer from the Sector to provide input regarding the content and scheduling of a livestock protection dog webinar. If you are interested and able, please contact Elizabeth Miller (elizabeth.a.miller@usda.gov) and you'll be connected with the Legislative and Public Affairs specialist at NWRC that is working on this matter.
- Nonlethal Livestock Protection Initiative
 - WS has expanded the Nonlethal Initiative to a 13th state. Nevada is receiving a small amount of funding to purchase fladry supplies to address issues with transient wolves.
- The Human Dimensions group within NWRC completed analysis on their cooperator surveys for those who received services the first year of the initiative. The group investigated cooperator attitudes towards nonlethal livestock protection tools, the administration of these tools via WS, and predators encountered. The report is attached and several highlights are shared in the executive summary.

National Animal Health Monitoring System (NAHMS) Update

Natalie Urie

- The first descriptive report for Goat 2019 is currently being reviewed. We hope to have it published by end of summer 2021
- Our collaborator is working to finish *Mycoplasma ovipneumoniae* testing by the end of summer. Our other lab collaborators are currently working to analyze data and write manuscripts.
- We have wrapped up the analysis of the results of Sheep Needs Assessment and are starting to meet with potential collaborators and industry to discuss industry needs and potential objectives.
- The Sheep Death Loss tableau report is currently with the editor. It will go to out of house review next week and then will need to go through the approval process. We don't expect it to be published by then end of June as dashboards are relatively new and may take longer for approval.

Agricultural Research Service Update

Stephen White

- Recently published a paper on a new respiratory *Mycoplasma* organism originally isolated from a moose in Alaska; different from *M. ovipneumoniae* but may confound diagnostic testing. This new *Mycoplasma* has been identified in a range of wildlife as well as domestic sheep. Link for publication:
Herndon DR, Beckmen KB, Highland MA. Draft Genome Sequence of a Novel *Mycoplasma* Species Identified from the Respiratory Tract of an Alaska Moose (*Alces alces gigas*). Microbiol Resour Announc. 2021. 10(8):e01371-20. doi: 10.1128/MRA.01371-20.
<https://journals.asm.org/doi/10.1128/MRA.01371-20>
- About 95% of mutations of importance are not found in the open reading frame of the genome but instead are regulatory in nature (e.g., in promoters). Some future research will be focusing on annotating mutations in infectious organisms of interest in sheep and goats that are in regulatory elements.
- Continuing to use proteome-wide approach for rational coxiellosis vaccine design.
Piel, L. M., Durfee, C. J., & White, S. N. (2021). Proteome-wide analysis of *Coxiella burnetii* for conserved T-cell epitopes with presentation across multiple host species. BMC bioinformatics, 22(1), 1-26.
<https://link.springer.com/article/10.1186/s12859-021-04181-w>
- A TSE scientist who had been deployed for COVID response is back to work and continuing research on scrapie.
- Joan Dean Rowe noted that relative to diagnostics for *Mycoplasma*, there are issues with speciation of *Mycoplasma* in goats and being able to differentiate among different species. Is there research currently being done that could help with this? Stephen White noted that there is work being done to sequence the full genomes of various *Mycoplasma* species which should be helpful in developing better diagnostics.

National Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory

Brucella ovis serum bank development update - **Kim Lehman**

- Goal is to acquire samples from 50-70 well-characterized *B. ovis* positive individual sheep to produce reagents for NVSL use for proficiency testing as well as use by anyone to develop and validate serologic testing.
- Have already acquired 30 individual positive sheep from the Midwest and West and are in the process of collecting serum and samples for tissue culture. Whole genome sequencing of any isolates obtained will be performed. Still looking for about 20 more positive sheep, please contact Kim if you are aware of any potential sheep at kimberly.lehman@usda.gov, 515-357-0580. Specifically looking for sheep that are serologically positive with clinical lesions. Joan Dean Rowe recommended contacting Bret McNabb at UC Davis, brmcnabb@ucdavis.edu because he is working on a flock clean-up and will be doing testing of the flock soon.

Animal Disease Traceability Update

Diane Sutton for Alex Turner

- The ADT program is working through the rulemaking process to propose a change to the ADT rule which would make electronically readable Official ID the only form of approved eartag for cattle and bison that require Official ID for the ADT rule.
- VS continues to distribute low-frequency RFID tags as a no-cost alternative to metal NUES tags from the KC warehouse for use in replacement cattle and bison. As of May 21, 2021, the USDA has shipped 4,671,435 white RFID tags and 2,966,721 orange OCV RFID from the VS warehouse.

Industry Concerns and Questions

- Joan Dean Rowe announced that ADGA had a new executive director, Lance Gerlach, and provided a link to biography: <https://adga.org/executive-director-welcome/>
- The annual stakeholder meeting tentatively planned for September 2021 will likely have an in-person and virtual option, with 1 person being invited from each organization to attend in-person. Once we receive the date options we will let people know.
- Cynthia Wolf reported that she has anecdotally experienced difficulties with eartag orders this year. Diane Sutton noted that if there are any issues, that people should email descriptions of the issues to her or Stephanie Brault.

Meeting adjourned 11:50 p.m.

Diane Sutton