



Vetcommuniqué

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Animal Health Committee Meeting 03, 11-13 May 2004

Welcome to the first edition for 2004 of the Animal Health Committee's (AHC) newsletter for food animal production industry bodies. The aim of Vetcommuniqué is to improve communication links between AHC and client industry bodies.

The first face-to-face meeting of AHC for 2004 will be held on 11-13 May in Christchurch, New Zealand. Face-to-face meetings are held twice each year, with the venue rotating around the States, Territories and New Zealand. At the face-to-face meetings, members discuss complex issues in depth and to consider reports from various committees and working groups.

The face-to-face meetings are attended by the Chief Veterinary Officers (CVOs) of the Commonwealth, States, Territories and New Zealand. Representatives from Biosecurity Australia, CSIRO and Animal Health Australia are also members.



KEY AGENDA ITEMS



Emergency use vaccines

A report is in preparation by the Office of the Chief Veterinary Officer, Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF). The report will consider issues about the sourcing of vaccines for the diseases included in the government-industry Emergency Animal Disease Response Agreement (EADRA).

Although arrangements have been substantially progressed for Australia's access to foot-and-mouth disease vaccine in an emergency, attention needs to be given to possible sources of supply of vaccine for most of the fifty-eight terrestrial animal disease covered by the EADRA. An investigation is being undertaken by DAFF which will also include vaccines for West Nile virus and for *Salmonella enteritidis*, although these diseases are not covered by the EADRA.

Ruminant feed ban

In 1997 ARMCANZ model regulations expanded the ban to prevent the feeding of mammalian material to ruminants.

Jurisdictions and AQIS have conducted an audit of compliance with their obligations under Aus-

tralia's ruminant feed ban. Animal Health Committee (AHC) will discuss the need for any review of the ban that might result from recent developments in Japan, Canada and the USA.

JD issues (Johne's Disease)

Cattle Council of Australia (CCA) has proposed a commencement date of 1 July 2004 for the implementation of a 'Financial and Non Financial Assistance Package for owners of Beef Cattle Herds infected with BJD'.



Information provided by the States has confirmed the number of herds that are known to be infected and also the average herd size. This information remains consistent with the data used to scope the financial and non financial assistance package.

CCA and the State BJD Coordinators have reconfirmed that all owners of known infected beef herds may apply for non financial assistance. Access to this advice is considered necessary to enable producers to decide if the implementation of an enhanced management plan is an appropriate business decision.

Transport of veterinary samples to laboratories

A review of current rules and procedures covering the transport of samples to veterinary laboratories is being undertaken.

During the past few years, significant changes have been made to both national and international regulations governing the transport of diagnostic samples, particularly in terms of air transport. Exercise Minotaur had further highlighted the large number of samples that might be submitted in the face of an outbreak of Foot-and-Mouth Disease in Australia. The review will consider how changes might affect transport of samples to laboratories during a disease emergency.

As potentially large numbers of samples may need to be submitted in an emergency, serious pre-planning will be required to ensure that an effective and sustained response could be mounted.

**Next meeting—AHC04—
to be held in South Australia , October 2004**

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AI – ongoing review of Australia's preparations in view of HPAI in Asia



Discussion and ongoing review of Australia's preparedness to manage an outbreak in view of the recent Asian HPAI outbreaks. Industry representatives have participated in the review.

Industry meetings

AHC will meet with New Zealand dairy representatives during the meeting in Christchurch. Representatives will update members on the dairy industry in NZ.

NZ biosecurity – recent developments

New Zealand's first biosecurity strategy was published in August 2003 by the Biosecurity Council, and has been fully endorsed by the NZ Government. The strategy proposes a new direction for New Zealand's biosecurity, to deal with the mounting pressures on the biosecurity system. It covers NZ MAF's relationship with animal health and welfare organizations, overseas trading partners, industry and the public of New Zealand. The NZ Chief Veterinary Officer will update AHC on the progress of implementation of the strategy.

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http://www.daff.gov.au/product_integrity_animal_&_plant_health/animal_health_committee