

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- Responding to Bovine Tuberculosis
- NVS Exercise Completed
- FAS-Cat
- Regulatory Update
- Oil Spill Info

State Veterinarian 2010 Update

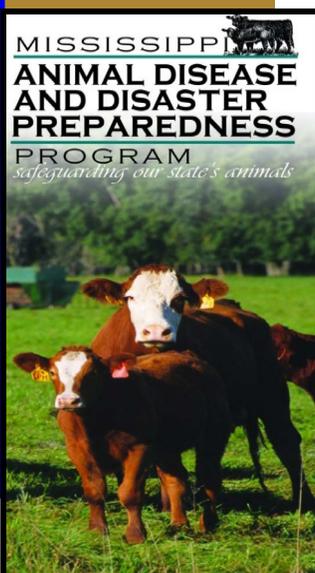
The first half of 2010 has been a busy year here at the Board of Animal Health. Along with many others, we have had to deal with the slow economy and resulting budget cuts, and are looking at a 14% budget cut for next fiscal year. While this will pose a strain on the agency, I am confident our employees will rise to the occasion and continue to provide the highest quality services to our stakeholders.

In addition to budgetary issues, we have had several issues keeping us busy on the animal health front. We are in the process of wrapping up six months of testing to clear up an infected Bovine Tuberculosis herd. We also have been dealing with several emergency management issues such as a National Veterinary Stockpile exercise, involvement in the gulf coast oil spill and tornado response activities.

Please periodically check our website (www.mbah.state.ms.us) for information and regulatory updates, and do not hesitate to call my office if I can be of assistance.

Jim Watson, DVM
State Veterinarian

Disease & Disaster Preparedness



The Mississippi Animal Disease and Disaster Preparedness Program is an extremely vital program to have in place in the event of a natural disaster or disease outbreak. The program consists of a confidential interactive registry of livestock producers. Registry information submitted by the producer is name, location, and species of animals on the farm.

The goal of the program is to have current contact information on as many producers as possible to rapidly mitigate the negative impacts of a disaster. By having this contact information available we can contact producers prior to a disaster, such as a hurricane, or immediately following a disaster, such as a tornado or disease outbreak.

This program is beneficial to both producers and the state by opening needed lines of communication and making information more available to both parties as well as helping protect them in the event of an emergency situation.

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“The MBAH is a small agency with a large footprint. The varied activities, the geographic area covered, and the expertise of the MBAH personnel bear this out.”

A Glance at 2009 & 2010

2009 was another active year for the Board of Animal Health. We responded to Contagious Equine Metritis, Equine Infectious Anemia, and Equine Piroplasmosis; monitored influenza in swine and poultry through surveillance programs; monitored diseases with public health importance, such as rabies and mosquito-borne encephalitis in animals; continued support for veterinary practitioners holding mass rabies vaccination clinics; hosted a MS Animal Response Team Summit; participated in a hurricane evacuation and pet sheltering exercise held by the MS Emergency Management Agency; provided human and animal disaster response training for our Veterinary Response Teams; participated in Pandemic Influenza planning with the State Department of Health; implemented a new primate health regulation; and began a new criticality assessment project to determine vulnerabilities in the food and agriculture system in Mississippi.

2010 started off with a new outbreak of Tuberculosis in cattle. Please see the article on page 3 from Dr. Watson that outlines the MBAH and USDA Veterinary Service activities to control this disease to date. **This outbreak reaffirms the need to firmly maintain the core mission of the MBAH, while expanding and supporting the more recently acquired responsibilities related to farm identification and emergency management.**

The MBAH is a small agency with a large footprint. The varied activities, the geographic area covered, and the expertise of the MBAH personnel bear this out. Your support and involvement is essential to our success. Our success is the continued protection of the animal assets integral to the well-being of our State. We look forward to working with you this year on the many new and continuing projects. We hope you find this newsletter informative and useful. Please let us know if you have any suggestions or comments.

Brigid Elchos, DVM
Deputy State Veterinarian
State Public Health Veterinarian



The MBAH conducted emergency management classes during the Mississippi Veterinary Medical Association's meeting held on Mississippi State University's (MSU) campus. MSU mascot, Bully, stopped by to serve as the "patient" in the Field Hospital the class set up that day.

Disease & Disaster Preparedness Continued...

In 2009, continuing into 2010, this program has been promoted all across the state of Mississippi at Cattlemen's meetings, trade shows, field days, horse shows, etc. Also, through a joint effort of the Mississippi Board of Animal Health and the Mississippi State University Extension Service, brochures and posters have been placed in all Extension offices and stockyards, as well as many feed stores and cooperatives.

Producers of all livestock species and all size farms are participating in the program. In 2009, 697 producers registered bringing the total participation to 8,100. As more people become aware of the program, participation will increase and more communities will benefit from the protection it can offer them.

Mississippi's Animal Disease and Disaster Preparedness Program is compliant with the Animal Traceability program, therefore, is able to cooperate in a national event. A representative from Mississippi attends the state coordinators' meetings to ensure our information and knowledge of the national program is kept current.

The database for this program is housed at the MBAH and is updated as new registrations are received. Using the database allows the most efficient processing of information, and allows the MBAH to allocate resources in the most efficient manner. **The database, along with GIS technology, provides the MBAH with a mechanism to prioritize the objectives and locations of a response to a particular disaster or disease event.** Having this program in place and fully functional will help the MBAH respond to a disaster or disease event when it happens and help speed the recovery from that event.

Jesse Carter
Animal Health Programs Coordinator

Mississippi Faced with Bovine Tuberculosis

This year, Mississippi joined the growing list of states with positive Bovine Tuberculosis cases. In January we were informed an animal from Mississippi had been condemned at a processing facility in Texas with lesions consistent with Bovine Tuberculosis. PCR testing and culture confirmed this was indeed a positive animal. Epidemiology revealed the steer (probably of Mexican origin) had entered the state in June of 2009 from Texas for a roping event. During the six months it was in Mississippi, the steer was on three different roping facilities before being sold through the stockyard to be fattened on grass prior to being sold for slaughter. Unfortunately, at the last facility, transmission occurred and a cow was infected and confirmed positive by culture.

In all, 1650 head of cattle were tested, over 80 head depopulated on 29 farms (there were exposed cattle that went to other states where they had to be quarantined and tested as well). We should have the final lab work by mid August to confirm there are no new cases, so the final 17 farms can be released from quarantine.

We started the testing on some cold rainy days in January, and finished up on some hot muggy days in June. I would like to thank Dr. Nettles and his USDA group, Dr. Pace and the diagnostic lab, as well as our Board of Animal Health staff, for the hard work and cooperation required to get the job done in a timely manner.

Along with many other states, Mississippi has reinstated TB entry requirements for all dairy cattle, and are looking into entry requirements for rodeo cattle.

Jim Watson, DVM
State Veterinarian



Animal ID Receives New Name

New name for the National Animal Identification Program... **Animal Traceability.**

USDA is drafting a federal rule that will require certain animals moving interstate to be identified and listed on Certificates of Veterinary Inspection. Each state will be responsible for meeting certain performance standards to remain in compliance with the new rule. It will probably take about 1 1/2 years for the rule to be implemented.

The role of the accredited veterinarian will be crucial to successful implementation of the new program. The use of electronic certificates of inspection will become more and more important, so I encourage you to consider using them now in your practice.

I will be glad to work with you and help get you started. Feel free to contact me at 601-359-1170 or jimw@mdac.state.ms.us.

Jim Watson, DVM
State Veterinarian

Successful Logistics Exercise

The MBAH has developed a detailed logistics plan, and in April put this plan to the test by exercising the deployment of the National Veterinary Stockpile (NVS).

The NVS provides the veterinary countermeasures - supplies, equipment, field tests, vaccines, and response support services - States need to respond to catastrophic animal disease outbreaks that terrorists or nature may create. The exercise was supported by USDA Veterinary Services (VS) and held at the Mississippi Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) warehouse.

A truckload of animal disease response supplies was successfully off-loaded, inventoried, and repackaged by a logistical team composed of personnel from the MBAH, USDA VS, and the MSU College of Veterinary Medicine. Personnel from the MS Department of Agriculture, Rankin County Emergency Management and MEMA provided safety, security, and documentation for the exercise.

The April tornado added a real-world challenge to the exercise that facilitated an even greater level of communication and collaboration. Many thanks to all the participants that made this process such a success!!

What is FAS-CAT?

Is it the name for a new experimental high performance NASCAR prototype?

How about a new breed of racing felines? Don't let the name fool you.

FAS-CAT stands for Food and Agriculture Sector Criticality Assessment Tool.

This tool helps identify critical assets in food and agriculture and provides a way to report them to the Department of Homeland Security (DHS).



The Mississippi Board of Animal Health (MBAH), as a member of the Southern Animal/Agricultural Disaster Response Alliance (SAADRA), has received a grant from DHS to identify, prioritize, and evaluate state and regional food and agricultural sectors at risk for a man-made or natural disaster. FAS-CAT is the tool that has been developed to present this information in a systematic, secure format.

The objective is to identify the most vulnerable food and agriculture systems and then develop plans and methods to protect them.

Since 9/11 and the formation of DHS, the nation has been assessing the vulnerability of critical infrastructure and key resources (CI/KR). These are sites that could be singled out for a planned terrorist attack.

DHS has focused most of their attention on buildings, structures, populations, and locations that, if targeted, could inflict the highest degree of damage. Until recently, food and agriculture has not been given much consideration in the process. It's not that DHS has not considered food and ag critical to our country. They just didn't have a method to determine the risks associated with it. That's where FAS-CAT comes in.

Partnering with the Mississippi State University Extension Service (ES), the MBAH will provide DHS with critical production, processing, and distribution information supplied by agricultural industry experts through a secure process. Information gathered in Mississippi will be merged with data from other SAADRA states to show the linkage of food and agricultural products that cross state and regional lines.

One of the primary functions of FAS-CAT is to provide DHS with adequate documentation to show that food and agriculture deserves to be considered at the highest level of CI/KR protection. Once this has been accomplished, additional federal funding could be available to properly protect these critical assets from attack.

Ronnie White
Emergency Programs

Help Mississippi Pets thru “I Care”



Last year, a national animal welfare organization provided research indicating **approximately 109,000 animals enter Mississippi animal shelters each year with 73,000 of those animals being euthanized.** This research is a prime example of the need for the Mississippi “I Care for Animals” car tag program.

The “I Care for Animals” program allows Mississippians to purchase a specialty license plate for an additional \$31. Money from each tag goes into a state animal care fund.

City and county animal shelters, private animal shelters and humane organizations submit grant applications requesting these funds. A panel of animal welfare people review the applications and make recommendations to the Mississippi Board of Animal Health as to which organizations qualify for funds. If the Board accepts the recommendations, money is allocated to the grantees for animal programs, with a special emphasis on spay/neuter programs.

The fund has helped homeless, injured and abused animals in shelters and humane organizations across the state. **All of Mississippi’s 82 counties have been assisted through this program.** Since 2004, when the first “I Care” grant was awarded, over \$340,000 has been distributed to organizations for spay/neuter and other animal welfare related programs.

City and county animal shelters, private animal shelters, and humane organizations from the State of Mississippi are welcome to apply for “I Care” funds. For details of the program please contact Beth Adcock at beth@mdac.state.ms.us or look online at www.mbah.state.ms.us.



Regulatory Update - Trichomoniasis

Earlier this year, the Board adopted a Bovine Trichomoniasis Regulation. Over the past two years, Texas, Louisiana, Arkansas, Oklahoma and Missouri all adopted similar regulations.

Our regulations require pre-entry testing of bulls unless they qualify for Virgin Bull Status. In addition, Trich Testing is a reportable disease and positive bulls must go to slaughter. Also, cattle tested for Trich must have USDA official ID (i.e. silver pass tag) and be listed on the test chart.

Many states now have entry requirements for bulls regarding Trichomoniasis, so make sure and check with the state of destination prior to shipping bulls.

“Cattle tested for Trich must have USAD official ID (i.e. silver pass tag) and be listed on the test chart.”

MBAH Assists with Gulf Coast Oil Spill

The Gulf Coast oil spill has been challenging and will likely be an ongoing topic for many newsletters.

Since the beginning of the spill, the efforts of the MBAH have been focused in two primary areas:

- communication flow, and;

- meeting the responder needs to address the humane rescue, transportation, stabilization, care, and rehabilitation of the wildlife on the coast of Mississippi.

The MBAH has been actively contributing, collecting and disseminating information regarding the spill and the wildlife aspects of the response. We would appreciate feedback on how this is working so we can continue to improve this vital activity. There has been much frustration regarding how to respond to this event since the course has not been typical of any response most of us have addressed to this point.

The MBAH will continue to send out updates and provide information on who, when, where, and how animal health responders can assist in the response and recovery efforts on our beautiful coast. Regardless, patience is most certainly a virtue.

Brigid Elchos, DVM
Deputy State Veterinarian
State Public Health Veterinarian

Oil Spill Resources:

- For information about the response effort, visit www.deepwaterhorizonresponse.com.
- For specific information about the federal-wide response, visit <http://www.whitehouse.gov/deepwater-bp-oil-spill>.
- To contact the Deepwater Horizon Joint Information Center, call (713) 323-1670.
- To volunteer, or to report oiled shoreline, call (866) 448-5816. Volunteer opportunities for Mississippi can be found at www.volunteermisissippi.org.
- To submit your vessel as a vessel of opportunity skimming system, or to submit alternative response technology, services, or products, call 281-366-5511.
- To report oiled wildlife, call (866) 557-1401.
- For information about validated environmental air and water sampling results, visit www.epa.gov/bpsill.
- For National Park Service updates about potential park closures, resources at risk, and NPS actions to protect vital park space and wildlife, visit <http://www.nps.gov/aboutus/oil-spill-resonse.htm>.
- For Fish and Wildlife Service updates about response along the Gulf Coast and the status of national wild life refuges, visit <http://www.fws.gov/home/dhoilspill/>.
- For daily updates on fishing closures, visit <http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov>.



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Veterinary Accreditation

Just a reminder, your Veterinary Accreditation will expire on August 2, 2010 if you do not renew.

Forms and directions can be found online at http://www.aphis.usda.gov/animal_health/vet_accreditation/.

You may also call Dr. Nettle's office or the Board of Animal Health for assistance.

Contact Information

At times, the MBAH needs to disseminate information to veterinarians. Please send us your email address so you may receive information in the most timely manner.

Training Opportunity

ICS-100 will be taught in the Jackson area on Saturday, July 31st. Anyone needing this training should contact Beth Adcock at beth@mdac.state.ms.us or 769-798-3137.

www.mbah.state.ms.us



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