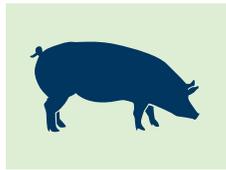


Updates and Activities

The Board is always working on its emergency response and preparedness for foreign animal diseases like highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) and African Swine Fever (ASF). A critical component of our preparation is the collaboration of our Emergency Disease Management Committees (EDMC) for poultry and swine.

EDMC for Swine



The EDMC for swine is comprised of experts from backgrounds as producers, swine veterinarians, University of Minnesota researchers, animal health officials and swine production companies. They work through challenges faced during an outbreak like moving healthy animals through the food chain while safely removing sick animals and stopping the spread of disease. Here's some of what they're up to:

- Planning and exercising depopulation methods including nitrogen gas and foam.
- Expanding diagnostic tools for detection and surveillance of ASF.
- Reviewing and enhancing biosecurity protocols.
- Distributing information for reporting loose pig sightings in Minnesota.
- Developing permitted movement requirements during animal disease events.
- Reducing opportunities for vectors to spread disease during an emergency response.

EDMC for Poultry



The EDMC for poultry is comprised of individuals with similar expertise from within the poultry industry and was the blueprint for the swine group. The poultry team continues to plan and

prepare for an avian influenza introduction and keeps industry stakeholders and veterinarians apprised of the latest influenza detections with disease alerts. The poultry EDMC has been busy the past few months and is in full preparation mode for spring 2021:

- Working with industry on disease surveillance and detections, ramping up awareness when wild bird migrations occur.
- Tracking and mapping recent low pathogenic avian influenza detections on premises in several adjacent counties to determine how the virus is spreading.
- Monitoring the HPAI situation in Europe and Asia because the migratory bird patterns are similar to those in 2014-2015.
- Training Board and USDA field staff to be Case Managers, veterinarians who would work directly with producers when responding to an introduction.
- Communicating with producers and veterinarians to ensure they have adequate supplies when collecting samples from suspect flocks.
- Reminding industry of the need for heightened biosecurity and flock awareness during the 2021 spring and fall migratory seasons.
- Reviewing and auditing producer biosecurity plans.

COVID-19

Processing Challenges

COVID-19 created significant delays in swine processing and a backlog in the industry's production chain.



- Plant slowdowns challenged the Board and its partners to respond to a non-animal disease affecting healthy livestock. The first step was standing up the Incident Management Team with the Department of Agriculture (MDA) to get the right resources out there for farmers struggling with the packing plant disruptions.
- The Board did not have jurisdiction to oversee depopulation and disposal procedures of healthy

livestock. However, our veterinarians and staff provided guidance to the industry regarding animal health and welfare in accordance with American Veterinary Medical Association standards.

- The Board coordinated rendering schedules and two carcass composting sites available free-of-charge to producers needing to dispose of any animals depopulated because of the plant slowdowns.
- Guided the livestock industry to all available resources for materials, information and reimbursement for depopulation and disposal of livestock.
- Worked with the MDA to provide mental health resources to veterinarians, producers and industry during the crisis.
- Worked with colleagues nationally to share experience and insight gleaned as the first state engaged in mass depopulation efforts.

Other Challenges

In addition to the plant slowdown response, we also tackled several other challenges spurred by COVID-19.

- Coordinated with county fairs and livestock exhibitions to either cancel events or hold them within guidelines established by the Minnesota Department of Health. This included ensuring events still had veterinarians inspecting all animals congregating for an exhibition.
- Contacted veterinarians and clinics throughout the state to provide safe operating guidelines so they could still provide essential services to animals.
- Worked with livestock auctions to get them the guidance and planning they needed to safely operate during the COVID-19 shutdowns.
- Partnered with the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) to educate veterinarians about when to test suspected COVID-19 (SARS-CoV-2) cases in animals and reported them to the CDC when a test was recommended.

Cervid Rulemaking:

Timeline

- Request for Comments published June 29, 2020.
- The Board formed an Advisory Committee to participate in the rule revision process. The first meeting was Wednesday, August 26, 2020. Minutes from the Advisory Committee meetings are published on the Board's rulemaking webpage (mn.gov/bah/public-rule-making).
- Comment period closed October 30, 2020.
- Goal is to publish Notice of Intent to Adopt proposed final rule draft in early 2021.
- Second comment period will open when the Notice of Intent to Adopt is published. Minimum length of comment period is 30 days.
- All drafts of the Farmed Cervidae Rules are available on the Board's rulemaking webpage (mn.gov/bah/public-rule-making). A revised draft of the Farmed Cervidae Program Surveillance Standards is also available online.



Listening Sessions and Meetings

The Board held several public listening sessions for the general public to make comments and suggestions on changes and corrections for any of the farmed Cervidae rules administered by the Board:

- Thursday, August 27, 5:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.
- Wednesday, September 2, 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.
- Wednesday, September 9, 6:00 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.
- Thursday, September 17, 10:45 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
- The Board held several listening sessions for tribal organizations:
 - Thursday, September 10, 1:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.
 - Friday, October 9, 10:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.
 - Wednesday, October 28, 10:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

The Board holds ongoing meetings with the Department of Agriculture, Department of Natural Resources and tribes regarding Cervidae in Minnesota.