

target to its statutory levels, and to recognize the importance of rural electric cooperatives to their communities.

“Co-ops provide power to 42 million Americans and account for 12% of total U.S. electricity sales,” said Johnson. “Any regulatory action must consider the impact on rural electrics and the communities they serve.”

Sources: AFBF and NFU.

USDA announces funding, issues federal order to combat PEDv

In response to the significant impact porcine epidemic diarrhea virus (PEDv) and porcine deltacoronavirus (PDCoV) are having on U.S. pork producers, the USDA June 5 announced \$26.2 million in funding to combat the diseases. Additionally, USDA issued a Federal Order requiring the reporting of new detections of these viruses to its Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) or state animal health officials.

These viruses do not pose any risk to human health or food safety, and they are commonly detected in countries around the world.

“In the last year, industry has estimated PEDv has killed some 7 million piglets and caused tremendous hardship for many American pork producers,” said Ag Secretary Tom Vilsack. “The number of market-ready hogs this summer could fall by more than 10% relative to 2013 because of PEDv. Together with industry and our state partners, the steps we will take through the

Federal Order will strengthen the response to PEDv and these other viruses and help us lessen the impact to producers, which ultimately benefit the consumers who have seen store pork prices rise by almost 10% in the past year.”

The \$26.2 million will be used for a variety of activities to support producers and combat these diseases, including:

- ▶ \$3.9 million to be used by USDA’s Agricultural Research Service (ARS) to support the development of vaccines;
- ▶ \$2.4 million to cooperative agreement funding for states to support management and control activities;
- ▶ \$500,000 to herd veterinarians to help with development and monitoring of herd management plans and sample collection;
- ▶ \$11.1 million in cost-share funding for producers of infected herds to support biosecurity practices;
- ▶ \$2.4 million for diagnostic testing; and
- ▶ \$1.5 million to National Animal Health Laboratory Network diagnostic laboratories for genomic sequencing for newly positive herds.

APHIS’ Federal Order requires producers, veterinarians and diagnostic laboratories to report all cases of PEDv and other new swine enteric coronavirus diseases to USDA and state animal health officials. The industry is already seeing herds previously impacted by the virus become re-infected. Routine and standard disease reporting will help identify

the magnitude of the disease in the United States and can help determine whether additional actions are needed.

The Federal Order also requires that operations reporting these viruses work with their veterinarian or USDA or state animal health officials to develop and implement a reasonable management plan to address the detected virus and prevent its spread. Plans will be based on industry-recommended best practices and include disease monitoring through testing and biosecurity measures. These steps will help to reduce virus shed in affected animals, prevent further spread of the disease, and enable continued movement of animals for production and processing.

For full details of the Federal Order and program requirements, along with a Q&A on this topic, visit the APHIS website, www.aphis.usda.gov/animal-health/secd.

Source: USDA.

Institute named OIE collaborating center

The National Center for Foreign Animal and Zoonotic Disease Defense (recently renamed the Institute for Infectious Animal Diseases [IIAD]) has been recognized as a collaborating center in the specialty of biological threat reduction for the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE). This designation was made at the 82nd General Session of the OIE in Paris, France.

The OIE is the intergovernmental organization responsible for improving animal health worldwide. It is recognized as a reference organization by the World Trade Organization (WTO) and has 180 member countries. The OIE maintains permanent relations with 51 international and regional organizations and has regional and sub-regional offices on every continent.

OIE collaborating centers represent expertise in a specific sphere of competence relating to animal health issues. As a collaborating center, IIAD will provide its expertise internationally to support and implement animal health initiatives, provide scientific and technical training, and conduct scientific research focused on global animal health. There are more than 40 collaborating centers worldwide, working in areas related to animal health, including animal welfare, food safety, vaccine development and disease surveillance. With this designation, IIAD becomes the only biological threat reduction center in the OIE’s Americas region and the only OIE collaborating center within the Texas A&M University System.

To learn more about IIAD, visit <http://iiad.tamu.edu>. For more information on OIE, visit www.oie.int/.

RESEARCH UPDATE

Repeatability of calving difficulty

Many producers are looking back through their calving books to re-examine the most recent calving season and determine if improvements can be made between now and next spring. At a recent Oklahoma extension event, a cow-calf producer asked the time-honored question: “If a heifer has calving difficulty this year, what is the likelihood that she will have trouble again next year?”

A look back through the scientific literature sheds some light on this subject. Research conducted by Colorado State University and published in 1973 looked at parturition records of 2,733 Hereford calves sired by 123 bulls and born to 778 cows/heifers. (Source: Brinks, et al., *Journal of Animal Science*, 1973:Vol. 36, pp. 11-17). A repeatability estimate was obtained from heifers calving both as 2- and 3-year-olds. The estimate was 4.5%. Of 195 heifers that had no difficulty in calving at 2 years of age, 7.2% had difficulty as 3-year-olds. Of the 77 2-year-old heifers that experienced calving difficulty, 11.7% had difficulty again as 3-year-olds.

Heifers that experienced calving difficulty as 2-year-olds weaned 59% of calves born, whereas those having no difficulty weaned 70% of calves born. Calving difficulty as 2-year-olds affected the number of calves weaned when 3 years of age and also the weaning weight of those calves.

Heifers having calving difficulty as 2-year-olds weaned a 63% calf crop as 3-year-olds. Heifers having no difficulty as 2-year-olds weaned a 77% calf crop as 3-year-olds.

From this research we learned that calving difficulty as a 2-year-old has a profound effect on productivity. The likelihood that calving difficulty will happen again next year is only slightly greater than in heifer counterparts that calved unassisted this year.

— by Glenn Selk, OSU Extension Cow-Calf Corner newsletter, OSU Emeritus Extension Animal Scientist