

BACON BITS

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Intensive Livestock Operations Update

The Honourable Ty Lund recently announced that the recommendations from the Livestock Regulations Stakeholder Advisory Group (LRSAG) on the proposed regulatory framework for intensive livestock operations will not proceed to legislation at this time. The Minister stated, "We need to build a stronger consensus before we can proceed with legislation, but there are a number of initiatives that can be implemented in the short term."

The *Code of Practice for Safe and Economic Handling of Animal Manures* provides technical guidelines for the siting of new and expanding livestock operations. Technical Services Division staff are consulting with the Intensive Livestock Working Group (ILWG), an industry group comprised of the Alberta Cattle Feeders Association, Alberta Pork, Alberta Chicken Producers, Alberta Cattle Commission and the Alberta Milk Producers, to assess the current *Code* and whether updating is required. Municipalities will also be asked for input.

Best Management Practices (BMP) guidelines for the livestock industry are in development. At present, Alberta Pork and the Alberta Cattle Feeders Association are working with department staff to develop guidelines for the pork and feedlot industries. The Alberta Chicken Producers have approved moving forward with BMP's, and the Alberta Milk Producers have expressed an interest in developing BMP's for their industry.

The Alberta Cattle Commission and department staff are working on a new publication addressing the issues surrounding wintering sites.

Environmental self-assessment and certification programs to voluntarily identify and remedy on-farm problem areas are being investigated. Voluntary certification programs in other jurisdictions in Canada and the USA are being evaluated for use in Alberta.

A peer review process to address public complaints related to livestock operations is being developed.

Nutrient management planning tools such as a manure calculator and a nutrient management curriculum are in development. Other extension tools include:

- *Manure Happenings* website at <www.fbminet.ca/manure/>
- Alberta Agriculture's own website, *Ropin the Web* at <www.agric.gov.ab.ca>.

Research to improve manure management practices and construction of manure storage facilities is underway. On-going research projects include developing soil phosphorus limits, evaluating manure application and odor control technologies and seepage studies for earthen manure storages.

The *Ag Summit 2000* which concluded in June provided a sounding board for land use and livestock development issues. Feedback from the Summit will assist in developing policy and programs to ensure sustainable development of the livestock industry.

The ways in which various government departments cooperate related to intensive livestock operations will also be clarified.

Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development will continue to work with industry and other stakeholders to provide the livestock industry with tools for sustainable development and to ensure it continues to be a player in Alberta's economic success.

For further information with regard to the activities and initiatives in the Intensive Livestock Operations (ILO) area, please contact us.

Dennis Glover
Director, Technical Services Division
Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development
Telephone: (780) 427-0674 Fax: (780) 427-1057

Darcy Fitzgerald
Acting Unit Leader, Livestock Expansion and Development
Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development
Telephone: (780) 422-2522 Fax: (780) 427-1057

Foreign Visitors and Livestock Diseases

If you are traveling outside Canada or hosting visitors from other countries, you should read this article carefully.

Many countries around the world have livestock diseases that are not found in Canada. Some of these diseases could be brought to Canada on contaminated clothing, equipment or in meat products. It has happened before. A foot and mouth disease outbreak was brought to Saskatchewan in the 1950's in contaminated meat, and it cost millions to clean up.

If a Foreign Animal Disease (FAD) enters Canada, our export markets would be shut down for at least six months. Controlling these diseases includes closing all roads in affected areas and slaughtering large numbers of livestock. The price of meat from the affected commodity would drop, and clean up costs would likely run into the billions.

This issue is a particular concern now since there have been recent foot and mouth disease outbreaks in several countries that we often receive visitors from, such as Japan, Korea and Taiwan. Countries not experiencing publicized outbreaks, such as China, likely have foot and mouth as well. Foot and mouth disease affects all cloven hoof animals, including cattle, pigs, deer and sheep. Horses and humans are not affected. Increased ease of travel and trade as well as reduced government spending has led to the recent spread of some of these diseases.

There are several other FAD's that are a concern, including hog cholera (Classical Swine Fever) and African swine fever. All these diseases spread very quickly, cause severe livestock losses and can be difficult to control. These viruses can be transported on footwear, clothing or equipment soiled with manure. The viruses can also be spread on body fluids from infected animals or in meat products. These viruses can survive for 36 hours or more on contaminated boots or clothing.

Travelers are usually questioned upon arrival at the airport, and luggage is often searched for meat products, but this procedure does not always occur. For this reason, everyone should take the following precautions when hosting foreign visitors to livestock units or returning from out-of- country travel.

Precautions

1. All footwear must be thoroughly cleaned and all clothing laundered before coming to Canada. Footwear previously soiled with manure, particularly leather footwear, should not be brought into Canada at all. Advise visitors to purchase new footwear or use footwear that has not been in contact with livestock.
2. Tell visitors to not be in contact with livestock, visit barns or slaughter houses for at least seven days prior to their departure for Canada.
3. Do not let visitors visit any agri-food establishments (farms, feedlots, slaughter or processing facilities) for at least 72 hours after entrance into Canada.
4. When visiting any agri-food establishments in Alberta, visitors should wear either disposable coveralls and overboots or clean cloth coveralls and boots supplied by the establishment.
5. Do not bring any meat or dairy products from another country into Canada. Do not let Canadian livestock come in contact with meat or dairy products from other countries.
6. Do not allow any equipment (even cameras) that has been to another country into an agri-food establishment unless it has been thoroughly cleaned and disinfected first. If it cannot be adequately disinfected, do not allow it in.
7. Producers should contact a veterinarian for the diagnosis of any new disease problem, even if mild.

The health status of Canadian livestock is one of the best in the world. We need to be vigilant to keep it that way.

Julia Keenlside, DVM, MSc.
Provincial Swine Veterinarian, Edmonton
Telephone: (780) 427-4614 Fax: (780) 427-1057
julia.keenlside@gov.ab.ca

Upcoming Events

Swine Technology Workshop – Red Deer

Wednesday, November 1 – 12 noon to 9 pm
Nursery Management

Thursday, November 2 – 8 am to 5 pm
Grow-finish Management

Featuring the launch of the new publication *Feeders Barn Design and Management* from the VIDO technical group (free to all registrants)

For information, registration or booth rental, contact:

Frank Aherne
Telephone: (780) 436-018 Fax: (780) 436-9409 or
e-mail: faherne@afns.ualberta.ca
11634 - 77 Ave Edmonton, Alberta T6G 0M3

Saskatchewan Pork Industry Symposium – 23rd Annual

Achieving our Potential

November 14 - 16

at the Saskatoon Inn, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan

Topics:

Investment Potential in the Pork Industry
The Human Side of Business
Understanding Value Chains
Stockpersons Seminar (on November 14 afternoon)

For information, contact:

Wendy Hayes – Coordinator
Telephone: (306) 933-5078 Fax: (306) 933-7352 or
e-mail: whayes@agr.gov.sk.ca

Banff Pork Seminar 2001 –

30 Years of Knowledge and Leadership

Tuesday – January 23 to Friday – January 26, 2001

Topics:

Positioning Pork in the Global Food Industry
Will Greenhouse Gases Constrain the Pork Industry?
Will We Use Genetically Modified Products in the Pork Industry?

Assuring Pork Safety

For more information or to register, contact:

Banff Pork Seminar
Telephone: (780) 492-3236 Fax: (780) 492-9130 or
e-mail: bps@afns.ualberta.ca
website: www.afns.ualberta.ca/bps