

U.S. Department of Agriculture Releases Interpretive Report on Biosecurity Practices at U.S. Dairies

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) National Animal Health Monitoring System (NAHMS) has released an interpretive report entitled *Animal Disease Exclusion Practices on U.S. Dairy Operations, 2002*. The report was compiled from data collected during the NAHMS Dairy 2002 study and takes an in-depth look at biosecurity practices on U.S. dairy farms. Copies of the report have been shipped to producers and other industry members across the country.

In 1991, NAHMS conducted the National Dairy Heifer Evaluation Project (NDHEP). Through this project, baseline information on heifer health, illnesses, and management practices, as well as prevalence estimates for *Cryptosporidium*, *Escherichia coli* 0157:H7, and *Salmonella* were published.

In 1996, the NAHMS' Dairy '96 study built on the results of the NDHEP. Objectives of the Dairy '96 study included estimating the national prevalence of *Mycobacterium paratuberculosis* (Johne's disease), bovine leukosis virus, and fecal shedding of *E. coli* 0157 and *Salmonella* in adult dairy cows.

The NAHMS' Dairy 2002 study continued to address issues important to the U.S. dairy industry by describing: changes in baseline dairy cattle health and management practices; strategies to address Johne's disease; management factors associated with the presence of certain food safety pathogens; and a profile of animal waste handling systems used on U.S. dairy operations.

Here are a few highlights from *Animal Disease Exclusion Practices on U.S. Dairy Operations, 2002*:

- While most dairy producers reported at least knowing some basics about foot-and-mouth disease, bovine spongiform encephalopathy, and Johne's disease, the majority of producers were essentially unfamiliar with heartwater, screwworm, bluetongue, and vesicular stomatitis.

- Most dairy producers (92.8 percent) reported that they would very likely contact their private veterinary practitioner for disease information if a foreign animal disease occurred in the United States.
- In 2001, nearly half (45.7 percent) of all dairies brought either beef or dairy cattle onto their operations.
- More than three-quarters of U.S. dairy operations (75.5 percent) did not require testing of cattle before the cattle were introduced onto the farm.
- Only one in five dairy operations (20.6 percent) that added new cattle quarantined those cattle.
- Overall, 51.6 percent of operations required some type of vaccination of incoming cattle.

Note to Stakeholders: Stakeholder announcements and other APHIS information are available on the Internet. Go to the APHIS home page at <http://www.aphis.usda.gov> and click on the "News" button. For additional information on this topic, contact Suzan Holl (301) 734-6464 or suzan.holl@aphis.usda.gov

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