



**Summary Minutes of the  
U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)  
Secretary's Advisory Committee on Animal Health**

- Committee**
- Michael Blackwell
  - Steve Crawford
  - Peter Cuneo
  - Glenda Davis
  - David Fernandez
  - Maximiliano Fernandez
  - John Fischer
  - Wayne Freese
  - Mary Ann Kniebel
  - Daniel Grooms
  - Charles Rodgers
  - Annette B. Jones
  - Mary Ann Kniebel
  - John Mahoney
  - Randy MacMillan
  - Judith McGeary
  - Willie Reed
  - G. Donald Ritter
  - David Smith
  - Belinda Thompson
  - Elizabeth Wagstrom

**Date and Time**          June 16, 2016 11:00a.m. EST – 1:30p.m. EST

**Location**                *Public Teleconference*

**Purpose**                    Consider, deliberate, and finalize recommendations on emerging animal disease response and comprehensive integrated animal health surveillance, topics pending from the February meeting and review 2015 Program responses.

**USDA**                      Cecilia Antognoli, Rosalyn Floyd, Patti Fox, Diane Sutton, Lee Ann Thomas

**Teleconference Summary**

RJ Cabrera, Designated Federal Officer (DFO) for the Secretary's Advisory Committee on Animal Health (Committee) called the meeting to order at approximately 11:00 a.m. EST. The new DFO, Dr. Diane Sutton was introduced to the committee, roll call followed.

Dr. Elizabeth Wagstrom presiding Chair, led with an overview of the purpose for the teleconference. Dr. Wagstrom led the Committee on the discussion of the topics still pending from the February 2016 SACA meeting in Dallas, TX. The two topics were:

**Emerging Disease Framework:**

The agency requested that SACA provide recommendations on the following questions:

1. Based on the definition of an emerging disease, are there thresholds that should be established before a disease is considered to be an emerging disease? If so, what should these thresholds be?
2. What additional criteria for response should be considered?
3. What criteria (or combinations of criteria) should VS focus on when determining response activities typically used in control or eradication programs (movement restrictions, vaccination activities, depopulation); and



4. What evidence should VS consider to determine when (or if) an emerging disease is endemic? In response to the Agency's question if there should be or what is threshold to consider a disease emerging? (FAD can be considered an emerging disease but do have codified plans.)

**Comprehensive Integrated Animal Health Surveillance (CIS):**

The Agency asked the Committee to provide recommendations on how best to help all stakeholders understand the importance of robust data collection, integration and reporting to the ultimate realization of comprehensive integrated animal health surveillance; support for the various data management assessments that are currently ongoing to find both short term and long term solutions to the management of animal health data; and provide suggestions on the needs of external customers and stakeholders for animal health information including the how best to access the information, the frequency it should be made available and the format(s) for reporting.

The Committee considered how emerging diseases should be defined and the criteria or triggers that should be used in determining when a disease was emerging. Criteria that were discussed included:

1. Whether foreign animal diseases for which a response plan exists should be excluded from the definition.
2. Whether the agent must be associated with a disease or a disease syndrome to be considered emerging.
3. Whether the agent is known to exist in the United States, is it a new strain of a known disease, there is evidence of change in the epidemiology, or there is zoonotic potential.
4. Triggers that were discussed included:
  - a. Mortality/morbidity that are alarming especially in multiple premises;
  - b. Unexpected increases in mortality/morbidity over previously defined for a disease causing agent;
  - c. Other epidemiological patterns or production impacts which are unexpected
  - d. Contagiousness (the Committee considered whether contagiousness should be added to the framework as a 14th criterion)
5. How weights should be given to each of the criteria.
6. What criteria (or combinations of criteria) should VS focus on when determining response activities typically used in control or eradication programs (movement restrictions, vaccination activities, depopulation)?
7. What weight wildlife impacts vs domestic livestock vs companion animals should be given? The Committee questioned: if there is no impact to domestic livestock, how should this be handled?
8. Wildlife as a reservoir for disease.
9. Indirect implications (e.g. vector epidemiology) for livestock or human health and environmental health.

The committee also discussed the need for a process to be developed that engages all impacted stakeholders in determining the response to, and identification of, a disease as emerging and the need for a process or criteria determining when (or if) an emerging disease is endemic. The committee considered whether a tiered approach – i.e. watch list, and elevate to an emerging disease, and then it falls off and becomes endemic should be used.



The Committee decided to continue deliberations on emerging diseases including discussing the tiered approach during the September 2016 SACAH meeting.

The Committee revisited CIS topics from the February 2016 SACAH meeting including:

1. Need for resources to bring the full network of animal health laboratories the capability to electronically message and share data. Particularly resources to electronically generate and message the full complement of diagnostic test results using standardized Logical Observation Identifier Names and Codes (LOINC<sup>®</sup>) and an Health Level-7 (HL7) message structure that are consistent with the NAHLN/USDA schema.
2. Need to prioritize comprehensive integrative surveillance activities using a risk assessment, risk management process.
3. How the NLRAD should relate to CIS and the need for reports be made readily available to stakeholders.
4. Need to institute the changes necessary for all reporting systems to report across systems. For example, a report into the EMERS system should notify those officials that require the knowledge whether state, federal, or tribal including laboratories.
5. Need to ensure that CIS functions are clear to stakeholders.

The committee assigned Judith McGeary to write a few sentences of introduction to review at the September 2016 SACAH and agreed to finalize recommendations at the September meeting.

For the specifics of these deliberations please refer to the transcript and recording of the call. These are posted on the SACAH website at <https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/ourfocus/animalhealth/sacah>

The meeting was adjourned by approximately 1:30 p.m. EST

Respectfully submitted:

**DIANE SUTTON**

Digitally signed by DIANE SUTTON  
DN: c=US, o=U.S. Government, ou=Department of Agriculture,  
cn=DIANE SUTTON, 0.9.2342.19200300.100.1.1=12001000001514  
Date: 2016.07.20 15:19:07 -04'00'

Diane Sutton  
Designated Federal Officer

I certify these summary minutes of the June 16, 2016, Secretary's Advisory Committee on Animal Health meeting are true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

Elizabeth Wagstrom  
SACAH Chair



**Note and Disclaimer:** The minutes of this public meeting are a summary only. A full transcript and audio recording of this meeting have been uploaded to the SCAH Web site. The reader is cautioned to not rely on the minutes to represent the final, approved, consensus-derived recommendations offered to the Department. Such advice and recommendations may be found in the final advisories, letters, or reports prepared and transmitted to the USDA from the Committee Chair(s).