

## NAHMS to Study Dairy Industry in 2002


The USDA's National Animal Health Monitoring System (NAHMS) conducts national studies of livestock populations designed around the information needs identified by people working with various livestock commodities.

In 1991, NAHMS conducted the Dairy Heifer Evaluation Project (DHEP). 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 obtained.

In 1996, the Dairy '96 study built on the results of the DHEP. Objectives of the Dairy '96 study included acquiring national prevalence estimates of *Mycobacterium paratuberculosis* (Johne's disease), bovine leukosis virus, and fecal shedding of *E. coli* 0157 and *Salmonella* in adult dairy cows. In addition, baseline dairy cattle health and management practices were studied to examine changes since the DHEP in 1991. Levels of participation in quality assurance programs, the incidence of digital dermatitis, and a profile of animal waste handling systems used on U.S. dairy operations were also examined. The Dairy 2002 study will continue to address the priority issues of the U.S. dairy industry.

Representatives of producer organizations, universities, state and federal animal health officials—and others allied with the dairy industry—helped to identify key information gaps through focus groups, personal interviews and surveys.

NAHMS is a voluntary program, relying on the interest and participation of producers. The concerns and information needs of individual producers and



### Objectives

- Describe management strategies that prevent or reduce the prevalence of Johne's Disease, and identify how these strategies have changed since 1996.
- Evaluate management factors associated with key food safety pathogens in U.S. dairy cattle.
- Describe the level of understanding and preparedness of U.S. dairy producers to respond to threats of foreign animal diseases.
- Describe biosecurity practices and trends on U.S. dairy operations.
- Describe baseline dairy cattle health and management practices used on U.S. dairy operations and the changes in these practices since 1996.
- Describe animal waste handling systems used on U.S. dairy operations.
- Describe U.S. dairy producers' attitudes towards, and uses of, animal identification.

## Needs Assessment Activities Dairy 2002

Conduct Focus Groups with:

United States Animal Health Association; American Feed Industry Association, Dairy Nutrition Committee; Bovine Alliance on Management and Nutrition; American Farm Bureau Dairy Advisory Committee; Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service; Food Safety Inspection Service; Agriculture Research Service; Food and Drug Administration; and National Milk Producers Federation Disease Advisory Committee

Personal interviews with dairy producers, industry representatives and dairy researchers.

Web based and telephone surveys.

producer groups are carefully considered to ensure that information acquired through the study is of greatest benefit to them.

### Dairy 2002 Objectives

Comparable data from the DHEP, Dairy '96 and Dairy 2002 studies will provide trends in dairy health management on U.S. dairy operations. Baseline cattle health outcomes, antimicrobial use, culling practices, and other health management practices will be described.

To assist in evaluating educational efforts, Dairy 2002 will explain changes in dairy producers' knowledge of Johne's disease since the Dairy '96 study. Assessments of management strategies used to prevent Johne's disease, including their associated costs, will be addressed in Dairy 2002, as will the levels of producer participation in Johne's disease control or herd certification programs.

The prevalence of fecal shedding of food safety pathogens assessed in the Dairy '96 study will be estimated in Dairy 2002 to evaluate potential changes since 1996. Management factors influencing bulk tank milk pathogens and an estimate of the prevalence of *Mycoplasma spp.* in bulk tank milk were identified as priority issues and will also be evaluated.

Foot and Mouth disease outbreaks worldwide have intensified concerns about foreign animal disease detection and control in the U.S. The Dairy 2002 study will describe U.S. dairy producers' knowledge of foreign animal diseases, reporting procedures and expected responses in the event of an outbreak in the U.S.

Biosecurity issues were a top priority among focus groups and those surveyed. Biosecurity operating procedures or plans implemented on U.S. dairy

Dairy 2002 Participating States\*



operations, as well as the producers' sources of biosecurity information, will be described in this study.

Environmental issues were also a main concern of dairy producers. A description of animal waste handling systems used on U.S. dairy operations will be included in the Dairy 2002 study.

Animal identification types and frequency of use in U.S. dairy operations will be described. Incentives required by producers to increase or improve use of animal identification will also be determined.

In January of 2002, National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) enumerators will contact dairy producers in 21 states. These states represent over 80 percent of the dairy herds and 80 percent of the dairy cows in the U.S. The data collected on individual operations is summarized and used in regional and national estimates. As always, links between NAHMS data, and operations on which the data were collected, are confidential and not included in national databases.

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\*Participating States: California, Colorado, Florida, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, New Mexico, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Texas, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, Wisconsin.