



December 6, 2024, Board Report

Division of Animal Industry

Division Overview

Pending matters of significance

- Livestock Inspection Program
 - Rebuilding continues in accordance with the Livestock Inspection Program Business Plan.
 - Staff continue to investigate possible electronic programs to replace outdated paper processes at the public livestock auctions.
- Nevada Administrative Code (NAC) 571
 - Staff have completed revisions and edits to the current proposed language in preparation for adoption hearing.
- Nevada Administrative Code (NAC) 584
 - Staff have begun reviewing NAC 584 for necessary updates and potential revisions to the current language for future in person, virtual workshops followed by a hearing.

Partnership activities

- United States Department of Agriculture-Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (USDA-APHIS)
 - Nevada Department of Agriculture (NDA) staff continue working in conjunction with USDA-APHIS in performing and furthering Nevada's Animal Disease Traceability (ADT) plan.
 - The NDA is now utilizing 2024 grant funding from USDA-APHIS for ADT and Umbrella cooperative agreements.
- The NDA was awarded \$43,620 for FY 2024 Animal Disease Traceability activities and \$32,759 to conduct Animal Health National Surveillance and Response activities. A portion of the funds were used to purchase RFID/EID tags.
- Wild Horse Connection (WHC)
 - The NDA is in the process of renewing the WHC non-exclusive cooperative agreement for the management of Virginia Range feral/estray (VRE) horses. It is currently operating under the prior year agreement.
 - From May 2024 to current Wild Horse Connection reports that there have been 190 calls received.
 - WHC reports sixteen (16) vehicle crashes involving VRE horses from May 2024 to November 2024. There were sixty-six (66) horses relocated. One (1) animal was hit by a train near I-80 and Derby Dam. The yearly total of crashes reported were as follows:
 - 2023 – 42
 - 2022 – 24
 - 2021 – 27
 - 2020 – 46

- From July 1 to the date of this report, WHC removed and relocated 69 horses that posed a public safety threat. The horses were relocated to an approved area of the VRE where water and feed are available.
- From August 7th to August 9th there were 24 horses deemed, by NDA, to pose public safety threats as nuisance horses and were trespassing on an active construction site. Horses had to be removed from the site due to dangers from open trenches and other hazards. Prior to NDA action, the NDA cooperator Wild Horse Connection was attempting to remove the horses for several weeks, with the assistance of the developer. Wild Horse Connection failed to relocate the horses to a safe location in a timely manner, and NDA acted. Despite interference, NDA was able to complete the removal in three days, with no VRE horses sustaining injury. Per NRS 569, the gathered horses were advertised to ensure there were no legal owners before being offered for adoption. After the advertisement process, all the horses were treated by a veterinarian and processed according to NDA guidelines. After treatment, Wild Horse Connection adopted all 24 horses, covering the adoption and treatment fees. Due to NDA gathering operations, there were an additional calls and emails specific to this removal.
- Per the cooperative agreement, diversionary feedings are done to draw horses away from highways and urban areas during the timeframe from October 1 – April 14 of each year. There are currently five approved diversionary locations, with feedings occurring at the time of this report. NDA continues to work with WHC by reviewing proposed diversionary feeding locations and anticipates additional locations will be approved prior to the next report.
- American Wild Horse Campaign (AWHC)
 - The NDA and AWHC has entered into a sixth year of non-exclusive cooperative agreement that runs from May 1, 2024, until April 30, 2025. The NDA continues to receive monthly reports from AWHC on the VRE horse fertility program. Monthly reports from May 2024 to current indicate that AWHC has administered fertility control vaccine to a total of 818 individual mares utilizing 828 doses, (158 doses given as a primer and 671 doses as a booster). The AWHC database has been updated to report 3,465 living and individually identified horses located in the Virginia Range. The number of alleged living horses includes 294 which AWHC has listed as "missing".
 - NDA's historical data of VRE horse population:
 - 1997: 413
 - 2002: 1,274
 - 2008: 1,448
 - 2014: 1,959
 - 2018: 2,951
 - 2022: 3,567

Program Updates

Commercial Feed

- This program has had 53 new or renewed, registered and active accounts from May 2024 to current. There are a total of 148 registered accounts up to current date, for 2024.

Livestock Enforcement

- The Agricultural Police Officers received a silver level award for Excellence in Online Training Management, from Lexipol Connect.
- The NDA's Agricultural Police Officers have dedicated their time toward the following duties during the time frame of May 3, 2024, to October 28, 2024.
 - 55 livestock investigations requiring 61 staff hours.
 - 123 staff hours of follow-up investigations.
 - 4 animal health investigations, 5 staff hours, 0 animals quarantined.
 - 35 Public Service Responses.
 - 132 traffic stops.
 - 31 transit inspections.
 - 7 check sites.
 - 91 brand inspections requiring 171 staff hours.
 - 8 strays.
 - 14 estrays.
 - 16 VRE responses requiring 113 staff hours.
 - 12 livestock in roadway responses.
 - 1 crash (traffic).
 - 2 crashes (livestock).
 - 4 highway kills.
 - 2 railroad kills.
 - 363 administrative staff hours.
 - 61 agency assists.
 - 111 staff training hours.
 - 1,001 phone calls.
 - 362 contacts made.
 - 84 staff hours for equipment maintenance.
 - 25 warnings.
 - 3 misdemeanor citation issued.

Livestock Identification

- Staff have completed more than 6,446 brand inspection clearance certificates for a total of 180,473 animals, including the public livestock auctions from May 3, 2024, to current.
- Brand inspectors have worked 5,611.26 hours and traveled 118,516.85 miles performing brand inspections.
- Division staff renewed 3 brands, approved 87 new brand applications, 11 temporary brand applications and transferred 21 brands. Currently, there are 8 pending brand applications.
- Currently, registered brand owners have renewed 4,403 active Nevada brands and there are currently 377 expired brands.

- Received 2,532 livestock assessment filings for July 1, 2024.
- There have been 2,497 livestock movement permits issued in 2024.
- Twenty-six (26) agricultural licenses have been issued from May 3, 2024, to current.
- Regarding the routine communications for the VRE project, the Sparks office and program staff have received more than 66 phone calls or emails relating to the Virginia Range Estray (VRE) horses from May 2024, to current. This is in addition to the 134 calls and 5 emails that specifically addressed the gathering event that occurred in August.
 - Throughout this reporting period, NDA staff have continued to meet and work with federal, state, county, and city agencies to collaboratively identify areas of the highest importance which require the installation of fencing to promote and protect public safety.
 - NDA has entered into a contract with a vendor for reconstruction of pre-existing BLM fences, and construction of new fences pending the completion of the NEPA study, in the Virginia Range Area. Approximately 6 miles of existing fencing have been rebuilt in the Washoe Valley area of the VRE.
 - All funding for fencing is sourced from the NDA Feral Horse Management Project.
 - On July 15, 2024, NDA welcomed John Axtell as the Project Manager for the VRE Feral/Estray Horse Project.

Predatory Animal and Rodent Control (PARC)

- PARC staff have provided technical assistance, non-lethal predator recommendations, and removal of predators where required across the state throughout the time of May 2024 to current. The primary species of predatory animals addressed during this time includes ravens at 53%, coyotes 44%. The remaining 3% was comprised of beavers, badgers, mountain lions, raccoons and a red fox.
- Staff provided public outreach to 720 individuals or businesses from May 2024 to current. No samples were taken for testing during this reporting period.
- Agricultural product losses verified by staff consisted of 9 calves, 11 sheep (adults), 138 sheep (lambs), and 1 goat (adult) and 4 chickens that were killed during the reporting period.
- Recruitment continues for one Field Assistant II position in Ely is in the process of being filled.

Veterinary Medical Service

- The NDA has a current recruitment open for State Veterinarian and anticipates qualified applicants to have been interviewed by the time of the Board Meeting.
- Veterinary Services continues to work with Nevada producers and veterinarians to implement USDA changes to the Animal Disease Traceability (ADT) Rule 9 CFR 86 which went into effect November 5, 2024. The most significant impact is that the definition of official identification tags in cattle and bison must both be visually and electronically readable.
- The previous NDA State Veterinarian and the Veterinarian Diagnostician both attended and presented at the 2024 American Association of Veterinary Laboratory Diagnosticians (AAVLD)/United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) in October. This

conference brings state and federal officials, veterinarians, and livestock producers together with the mission to control livestock disease in the United States by sharing scientific discipline-based materials, review policies and provided resolutions regarding animal disease control programs.

- State veterinarian worked with import/export personnel at USDA to help an equine venue in Las Vegas comply by setting up a temporary quarantine for an event horse from Europe. They have been given approval by USDA to house the horse.
- With the discovery of H5N1 or Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) in dairy cows there have been a variety of phone calls and meetings to try and get an understanding of how it is spread and the impact it will have on the dairy industry. There is now a Federal Order that requires all lactating cows to be tested for H5N1 through a National Animal Health Laboratory Network (NAHLN) approved laboratory prior to interstate movement. This does not affect cull cows that are going directly to slaughter. It also does not affect intrastate movement currently. Although this is a spillover event from wild birds into cattle, the issue still needs further research done to see if there are cow to cow, or multiple spillover events occurring. Since pigs are highly susceptible to influenza infections, the pork industry is following this closely, and there was one spill over event reported in an Oregon backyard swine operation in November. The National Assembly of State Veterinarians and National Association of State Departments of Agriculture (NASDA) have been monitoring this closely and working with federal agencies to make sure messaging is consistent and to stay current on the best ways to protect the industry. There is a USDA mandate to conduct silo testing on raw milk at all Class A processing facilities. This is an attempt to better understand the prevalence of H5N1 in our dairy industry. A traceback system to the farm of origin is a component of this mandate.
- Positive herds and fence line contacts under hold orders for Trichomoniasis are continuing to report that they are testing and will remove any positive bulls to have quarantine orders lifted.
- The NDA continues to submit samples for sheep and goats to meet the requirements of the National Scrapie Eradication Program. The most updated information indicates that the NDA collected 11 sheep samples and 3 goat samples from July 1, 2024 – September 30, 2024. The NDA collected a total of 282 sheep and 24.5 goats.
- From July 1, 2024, to September 30, 2024, 1162 sheep and 1287 goats were inspected at the two Fallon public livestock auctions for scrapie identification compliance.
- Veterinarian Services staff have been collaborating with the state of Nevada Department of Health regarding outreach education for H5N1 that would be distributed to Nevada's dairy producers and workers.
- The Animal Disease Laboratory (ADL) performed 2,213 procedures accounting for 6,372 tests and/or services.
- ADL's Equine Infectious Anemia (EIA) laboratory program in Sparks was inspected by the USDA in June with no deficiencies noted.
- ADL staff located in Sparks and Elko successfully participated and passed the 2024 Equine Infectious Anemia Proficiency test issued by the USDA-National Veterinary Services Laboratory (NVSL).
- The ADL welcomed the TMCC's Veterinary Nursing Program Class of 2024 starting in late August with internship visits scheduled through November. The students are

provided training on topics including zoonotic and non-zoonotic diseases, disease traceability, state and federal regulations, and laboratory testing procedures.

- In October, the ADL hosted a wildlife Necropsy Class for the Nevada Department of Wildlife (NDOW) and students from the University of Nevada, Reno.
- NDA staff continues working with Nevada Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) on the 2023-24 Influenza and Zoonoses Education among Youth in Agriculture program, in collaboration with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists (CSTE).
- The ADL and other laboratories at the NDA continue to work on a comprehensive build for a new laboratory information management system (LIMS). The vendor is currently working with the NDA laboratories and their subject matter experts to ensure a smooth transition.

Dairy/Processing/Auditing

- Inspection staff conducted/completed the following for dates from May 2024 to the time of this report:
 - 39 dairy farm inspections and 29 re-inspections.
 - 2 single service facility inspections.
 - 22 food processing plant inspections and 3 re-inspections.
 - 21 pasteurization equipment testing and sealing tests.
 - 19 warning and complaint notices.
 - collected 299 milk samples.
 - evaluated 17 bulk milk hauler samplers/weighers.
 - 11 milk plant sampler evaluations.
 - 6 plant/farm ratings.
 - 15 milk tank truck inspections.
 - 3 Food Safety Plan reviews and 0 label reviews.
 - 70 field investigations.
 - 9 Meat & Poultry Processing Facility Inspections.
 - 2 Industry Laboratory Evaluations.
 - 8 Consumer Inquiries.
 - 1 Complaint Investigation.
 - 32 water samples collected.
 - 2 total audits completed.
 - \$611.59 total money collected from audit findings.
- The Dairy Distribution Program currently has 250 dairy distributors licensed and 15 Craft Food Permits. Renewal notices for dairy licenses are currently being sent out.
- Staff escorted Lynn Godfrey from Idaho for United States Food and Drug Administration (FDA) ratings on two Grade A facilities. Both facilities passed ratings and were relisted on the Interstate Milk Shippers (IMS) list.
- Dairy Staff Attended the National Association of Dairy Regulatory Officials Annual Meeting in Tucson, Arizona.
- There were two Environmental Health Specialist positions vacant and have been filled.
- The vacant Auditor III position has been filled. Incumbent has conducted an internal audit of the dairy distributor accounts. This audit has resulted in 27 invoices being sent out and \$11,456 being collected.

- By the time of the Board Meeting, it is anticipated that all vacant positions within the Dairy Program will be filled.

Industry Impact

- The Animal Disease Traceability (ADT) rule was published May 9, 2024. The rule went into effect November 5, 2024, meaning official identification that is applied after that date, must be both electronically and visually readable. Cattle that already have non-electronic official identification, such as a metal Brite tag or metal brucellosis vaccination tag, applied before November 5, 2024, may continue to use that tag as official ID for the span of the animal's life.
- Nevada Administrative Code (NAC) 571 in-person, virtual workshops have been held. Finalized adjustments will be made and an Adoption Hearing date will be determined and appropriately advertised.