



# June 4, 2024, Board Report

## Division of Animal Industry

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### 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  - Staff continue to investigate possible electronic programs to replace outdated paper processes at the public livestock auctions.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 for future in person/virtual workshop and later hearing.
- Elko Program Officer I position was filled May 13, 2024, by Scottie Vega.
- 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 and later 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.
  - NDA continues to utilize a subaward, Epidemiology and Laboratory Capacity (ELC) Cooperative Agreement under the Nevada Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), Division of Public and Behavioral Health (DPBH). Funding covers arboviral activities for the state.
- Wild Horse Connection (WHC)
  - The NDA renewed the WHC non-exclusive cooperative agreement in September 2023 for the management of Virginia Range feral/estray (VRE) horses. From February 2024, to current there have been 271 calls received.
  - WHC continues to perform diversionary feeding in only NDA approved locations, during the timeframe October 14 – April 14. This is done to draw horses away from highways and urban areas. All diversionary feedings have been vacated as of April 14, 2024.
  - WHC reports six (6) vehicle crashes from February 2024 to current which involved VRE horses. The yearly total of crashes reported were as follows:

- 2023 - 42
  - 2022 - 24
  - 2021 - 27
  - 2020 - 46
- Relocations from February 2024 to current: 4 horses have been relocated from various urban areas of the Virginia Range. These horses were relocated to less urban/populated areas of the Virginia Range.
- 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 during the timeframe of February 2024 to current indicate that AWHC has administered fertility control vaccine to a total of 527 individual mares utilizing 531 doses, (114 doses given as a primer and 417 doses as a booster). The AWHC database has been updated to report 3,519 living and individually identified horses located in the Virginia Range. The number of alleged living horses includes 370 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 49 new or renewed, registered and active accounts from February 2024 to current. There are a total of 116 registered accounts up to current date, for 2024.

### Livestock Enforcement

- The NDA's Agricultural Police Officers have dedicated their time toward the following duties during the time frame of February 9, 2024 to May 3, 2024;
  - 31 livestock investigations requiring 69 staff hours;
  - 87 staff hours of follow-up investigations;
  - 6 animal health investigations, 12 staff hours, 11 animals quarantined;
  - 26 Public Service Responses;
  - 91 traffic stops;
  - 13 transit inspections;
  - 15 check sites;
  - 62 brand inspections requiring 76 staff hours;
  - 10 strays;
  - 3 estrays;
  - 4 VRE responses requiring 7 staff hours;
  - 2 livestock in roadway responses;

- 2 crash (traffic);
- 1 crash (livestock)
- 3 highway kills;
- 3 railroad kills
- 204 administrative staff hours;
- 34 agency assists;
- 1499 staff training hours;
- 754 phone calls;
- 173 contacts made;
- 51 staff hours for equipment maintenance;
- 18 warnings;
- 4 misdemeanor citations issued.

### **Livestock Identification**

- Staff have completed more than 2,385 brand inspection clearance certificates for a total of 64,809 animals, including the public livestock auctions from February 10, 2024, to current.
- Brand inspectors have worked 1,873 hours and traveled 39,080 miles performing brand inspections.
- Division staff renewed 3 brands, approved 36 new brand applications, 11 temporary brand applications and transferred 16 brands. Currently, there are 5 pending brand applications.
- Currently, registered brand owners have renewed 4,317 active Nevada brands and 417 expired brands.
- Received 2,402 livestock assessment filings for 2023.
- There have been 2,112 livestock movement permits issued in 2024.
- Eleven (11) agricultural licenses have been issued from November 1, 2023 to current.
- The Sparks office and program staff have received more than 35 phone calls or emails relating to the VRE horses from February 2024 to current.
  - Throughout this quarter, NDA staff have continued attending meetings 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 identified three existing contracted vendors that can allow immediate fencing requirements to be placed out for bid with only slight changes to existing contracts once all stakeholders have approved.
  - All funding for fencing is sourced from the NDA Feral Horse Management 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 February 2024 to current. The primary species of predatory animals addressed during this time includes European starlings at 99% and the remaining 1% was comprised of coyotes, ravens, feral pigeons, beavers, mountain lions, badgers and striped skunks.

- Staff provided public outreach to 309 individuals or businesses from February 2024 to current. PARC staff took several samples of European Starlings for testing during this reporting period and the results have confirmed that no additional testing is necessary at this time.
- Agricultural product losses verified by staff consisted of 234,090 lbs. of milk; 46.2 tons of feed; 2 cows; 42 lambs; 38 adult sheep, 5 adult goats, 81 kid goats, 154 chickens, 5 farm ducks and 52 calves that were killed during the reporting period.
- Recruitment for one Field Assistant II position in Fallon is in the process of being filled. Recruitment for one Field Assistant II position in Ely is in the beginning stages of the process.

### **Veterinary Medical Service**

- In February, the State Veterinarian attended the Nevada Veterinary Medical Association meeting held in Las Vegas.
- 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 NDA staff have collected 51 sheep heads for the months of January to March 2024. From October 1, 2023, through April 30, 2024, there have been a total of 209 sheep and 5 goat samples collected for scrapie testing. Last fiscal year (2023), the state of Nevada met the USDA-required minimum number of samples for scrapie testing, thus maintaining Nevada's Scrapie Consistent State status.
- From January 1, 2024, to March 31, 2024, 978 sheep and 698 goats were inspected at the two Fallon public livestock auctions for scrapie identification compliance.
- State Veterinarian is working with garbage feeders to make sure they are in compliance with state and federal regulations by doing quarterly inspections.
- State Veterinarian is continuing to work with the United States Swine Health Improvement Program to understand the benefits to Nevada Pork producers.
- The State Veterinarian attended the United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) Government relations meeting in Washington D.C. and visited with Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service Veterinary Services (APHIS-VS) as well as American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA), Department of Homeland Security – Customs and Border Protection (DHS-CBP), Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). There were also visits with industry and National Association of State Departments of Agriculture (NASDA). There does seem to be an increased awareness and support for foreign animal disease surveillance at our ports. USDA-VS struggles with increased funding requirements and lack of appropriations in the budget to meet these needs. Everyone was hopeful that the Animal Disease Traceability (ADT) rule would be posted soon as they were to budget \$15 million for Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) tags and infrastructure. This meeting was in conjunction with the American Association of Veterinary Laboratory Diagnosticians (AAVLD) who provided some information on lab capacity and testing. This meeting was held just prior to the detection of H5N1 or Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) in dairy cows and at that time it was still an unknown mastitis issue, present in industry.
- With the discovery of H5N1 or 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 at this time. 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. As of this report, the H5N1 is still avian and has not re-combined to be a mammalian virus. Since pigs are highly susceptible to influenza infections, the pork industry is following this closely. The National Assembly of State Veterinarians and 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. As of this report there are 39 premises in 9 states affected.

- Herds and fence line contacts under hold orders for Trichomoniasis are continuing to report that they are testing and will remove any positive bulls, in order to have quarantine orders lifted.
- Dr. Forbes and Dr. Mundschenk attended the Clark County Fair on April 10, 2024, to assist with veterinary check-ins of sheep and goats and inspect for scrapie tag compliance.
- Dr. Forbes assisted USDA APHIS-VS with performing Bovine Tuberculosis (TB) by Comparative Cervical Test (CCT) testing in January 2024, for a cattle herd. All results were negative.
- The Animal Disease Laboratory (ADL) performed 2,081 procedures accounting for 7,381 tests and/or services.
- The Elko lab was approved for Equine Infectious Anemia (EIA) Coggins testing by the USDA.
- NDA staff continues working with DHHS on the 2023-24 Influenza and Zoonoses Education among Youth in Agriculture program, in collaboration with the 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.
- In April, the ADL Supervisor attended the 7th Annual Progress and Planning Meeting hosted by the Pacific Southwest's Center of Excellence in Vector-Borne Diseases, 2024, which was hosted by the CDC. Multiple sessions were held related to strategies to prevent and control vector-borne diseases.
- The NDA hosted the annual Nevada Vector Control Association meeting, engaging partnership agencies including vector control and public health. The group reviewed and discussed the upcoming arboviral surveillance plans for the state.

### **Dairy/Processing/Auditing**

- Inspection staff conducted/completed the following for dates from February 2024 to the time of this report:
  - 23 dairy farm inspections and 17 re-inspections;
  - 1 single service facility inspection;
  - 16 food processing plant inspections;
  - 10 pasteurization equipment testing and sealing tests;
  - 19 warning and complaint notices;
  - collected 155 milk samples;

- evaluated 7 bulk milk hauler sampler/weighers;
- 15 milk plant sampler evaluations;
- 3 plant/farm ratings;
- 6 milk tank truck inspections;
- 34 water samples were collected;
- 2 Food Safety Plan reviews and 2 label reviews;
- 27 field investigations.
- The Dairy Distribution Program currently has 250 dairy distributors licensed and 15 Craft Food Permits.
- The Dairy Team attended a Milk Pricing Training Class conducted by Mike McCulley of McCulley consulting.
- The Inspection team attended the Western Regional Milk Seminar in Golden Colorado.
- Three staff members participated in FDA proficiency testing of finished dairy products.
- Staff escorted Lynn Godfrey from Idaho for FDA ratings on two Grade A facilities. Both facilities passed ratings and were relisted on the Interstate Milk Shippers (IMS) list.

### **Industry Impact**

- The ADT rule was published May 9, 2024. The rule will go into effect November 5, 2024, meaning official identification that is applied must be RFID tags. All cattle tagged prior with a metal tag will be grandfathered in.
- Nevada Administrative Code (NAC) 571 in-person, virtual workshops will be held in July, dates to be determined, at The Nevada Department of Agriculture Sparks office and a second location, to be determined.