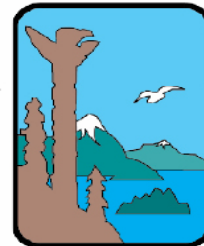


Alaska Animal Health Emergency Management Plan

9/6/06



ALASKA
Department of
Environmental
Conservation



U.S. Department of Agriculture
Animal Plant Health Inspection Service, Veterinary Services

ASSUMPTIONS

- A. Agencies, organizations, and individuals identified in this plan are familiar with it, and will execute their assigned responsibilities, including the timely reporting of disease.
- B. If a Foreign Animal Disease (FAD) is discovered anywhere in the United States, the entire agricultural complex of the country may be at risk.
- C. There is the potential for the state to incur a disease and/or threat of disease as a result of an act of terrorism.
- D. Numerous local, state, federal and volunteer organizations will play a role in eradicating a FAD.
- E. FAD control efforts and large scale disasters quickly require federal involvement.
- F. Alaska Department of Military and Veterans Affairs (DMVA), Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management (DHSEM) coordinates assistance to local jurisdictions by state and federal agencies in case of a disaster or animal health emergency.
- G. Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation, Division of Environmental Health, State Veterinarian's office will utilize the Incident Command System (ICS) to manage the response to a FAD, any other highly contagious disease threat or disaster involving animals within the state.
- H. The Area Veterinarian in Charge (AVIC) for the United States Department of Agriculture, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Veterinary Services (USDA, APHIS, VS) will assist the State Veterinarian as appropriate in any animal health emergency.
- I. The diagnosis of a FAD in Alaska, the United States, or surrounding countries may significantly restrict the intrastate, interstate, and international movement of animals (especially livestock) and animal products.
- J. The function and access to public utilities, water, roads, and veterinary medical supplies may be severely restricted or inaccessible after a disaster or in the event of quarantine.
- K. The incursion of FADs, other highly contagious diseases and catastrophic events will necessitate mass culling of livestock (animals and/or birds), carcass removal and disposal.
- L. Response efforts could also encompass culling of non-domesticated populations such as wildlife.
- M. Animal carcasses, unused animal feed, manure and other organic matter may create sanitation, pest, and vector control issues.
- N. Widespread biosecurity control measures may be implemented. Suspected infected locations and transport vehicles may need to be cleaned and disinfected.
- O. Quarantine of areas may be required where there are confirmed or suspect cases. Special operational procedures within these zones may be required. Law enforcement may be required for quarantine enforcement.

P. Livestock disease emergencies may lead to long term economic impacts requiring long term federal and state assistance programs for recovery.

Q. Owners losing animals in a disaster or persons responsible for euthanasia and disposal of animals may require psychological counseling and support.

R. In a multi-state outbreak of a highly contagious disease like Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD), USDA, APHIS will coordinate the national response and work with states as outlined in the *National Animal Health Emergency Response Plan For An Outbreak of Foot-and-Mouth-Disease or Other Highly Contagious Animal Diseases (NAHERP)*, draft 9/19/02.

I. INTRODUCTION

Alaska is the largest state in the union, covering 586,000 square miles. Farm land represents less than 1% of the land in the state and is located in many areas throughout the state. The Tanana Valley, from Fairbanks to Delta Junction, produces much of the state's barley, hogs and beef, as well as hay, oats, potatoes, milk, and greenhouse plants and vegetables. The Matanuska Valley, which is northeast of Anchorage, produces much of the state's vegetables as well as milk, hogs, beef, potatoes, oats, hay, and greenhouse plants and vegetables. Some of Alaska's beef cattle are located on Kodiak Island and the Aleutian chain of islands. The alternative livestock industry is a developing enterprise in the state. Musk ox, yaks, bison, llamas, alpacas, elk and reindeer operations are located throughout the Tanana Valley, Matanuska Valley, Kenai Peninsula and Kodiak Island. The Seward Peninsula is the residence of the vast majority of Alaska's reindeer (over 16,000) which are managed by the Kawerak Reindeer Herders Association.

Other areas of the state that have commercial agriculture include parts of Kodiak Island, the western part of the Kenai Peninsula, and the Copper River Valley near Kenny Lake. Aquaculture, entirely shellfish since fish farms are not allowed by state law, is a fast growing industry in the State. Many aquaculture operations are found in the Southeast, the Kenai Peninsula, and the Cook Inlet near Anchorage. Alaska's cash receipts from farm marketing were approximately \$46.1 million for 2002. Livestock and specialty products totaled approximately \$25.6 million. The value of crops was \$20.5 million. The top five Alaskan commodities in terms of cash receipts are aquaculture, greenhouse and nursery production, potatoes, milk and hay production.

Alaska's agriculture industry continues to provide technology, jobs, and educational opportunities and is supported by the State's land grant university, the University of Alaska. The university operates agricultural research stations in the Matanuska Valley and Fairbanks. Cooperative efforts within the industry have resulted in organic, value added products, and niche markets, all enhanced by a relatively pest-free environment. Farmers' markets at the grass roots level let producers showcase and promote their commodities.

The agriculture industry in Alaska is a significant contributor to the economy of the state. Increased tourism, international travel and commerce, animal imports and migratory animal populations (mammal, bird and fish) all increase the risk of introduction of

disease to state resources. The negative impact of an outbreak of disease, or impact of a natural or man-made disaster could result in large economic losses.

Alaska's wildlife is among the most abundant in the nation and is a valuable resource to the state's economy. Tourism and Alaskan seafood are major contributors to the state's income and important to the commerce of the United States. Alaska provides over 50% of the nation's commercially produced seafood. The wildlife component of Alaska's entire animal populations (terrestrial and marine mammals, birds and fish) are a special challenge for animal health emergency planning. During an incursion of a foreign animal disease (FAD), susceptible wild animals may become infected and act as reservoirs and sources of new infections for livestock, thereby prolonging outbreaks and trade embargoes, complicating eradication and control efforts, thereby amplifying the economic harm to livestock and related industries.

Unquestionably, wild animals themselves can be harmed by FADs. They can experience clinical disease signs such as increased sickness and mortality, reproductive loss, and increased predation when FADs are introduced. As a result, the state's natural resources and associated ecologies and economies can be significantly affected through the impact of disease on wild animal populations. Wild animals also can be harmed and diminished by FAD control activities when these include destruction, confinement, or harassment of wildlife. Wild animals are can therefore serve as potential sources of FAD for livestock, as well as potential victims of both the diseases and their control measures. Since many remote communities rely on wild animals and fish for subsistence disease outbreak would have severe consequences.

Effective disease control and an efficient, well-organized response to a disaster requires full utilization of available resources and cooperation of all local, state, and federal agencies in order to minimize the impact on the state's economy.

The Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation, Division of Environmental Health (location of the State Veterinarian's office) is the primary state agency with statutory authority pertaining to animal and animal industry issues. The Division of Environmental Health (DEH) is responsible for, but not limited to, coordinating disease control procedures, disposition of abandoned, disabled, or dead animals, and agro-terrorism. This plan recognizes certain catastrophic events related to animals, animal and production agriculture as events requiring activation of the state emergency operations plan. This plan supports the control efforts of public health agencies in controlling zoonotic diseases and law enforcement in acts of terrorism where animal agriculture is the vehicle for dissemination of a chemical or biologic agent.

II. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The purpose of the Alaska Animal Health Emergency Management Plan (AAHEMP) is to supplement the Alaska State Emergency Management Plan for the overall intention of protecting the agricultural community by providing a guide for a rapid and coordinated response to a FAD or other disaster. This plan coordinates the application of local, state, federal and volunteer resources in mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery efforts

to assist animals and animal agriculture in an animal health emergency, natural disaster, or other catastrophic event whether natural or man-made and where necessary, provide for a seamless integration of county, state, and federal response.

This plan identifies the roles and responsibilities of the AAHEMP participants to protect the public health and the agricultural industry of Alaska. The state's vast herds of wildlife are of special significance and consideration for this plan.

III. ACTIVATION CRITERIA

The Alaska AHEMP will be activated only when the state's routine prevention and response activities and capabilities are exceeded.

An animal health emergency would occur when a highly contagious, infectious, or economically devastating animal disease or agent is confirmed in Alaska, other states or a country adjacent to the United States (i.e. Canada and Mexico). A new, "emerging disease" might also cause an emergency situation. Animal diseases categorized as "Foreign Animal Diseases" are those that have either never existed in, or have been eradicated from the United States. Sources of a FAD include, but are not limited to, live animals, insects, animal products, people, or contaminated inanimate objects. The introduction of a FAD could be accidental or intentional (bioterrorism/ agro-terrorism).

An emergency may also occur when a natural (earthquake, tsunami, winter storm, avalanche) or man-made disaster causes mass animal destruction, necessitates large numbers of animal rescue and sheltering, or could cause transmission of animal disease to people. Any disease, agent, or disaster event necessitating a large number of animals be managed, treated, or destroyed and disposed of would overwhelm the capabilities and resources of the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation.

Any factor causing a substantial impact on the safety and stability of the food supply from animal sources may be categorized as an animal health emergency.

IV. RESPONSE LEVELS

The Alaska AHEMP utilizes emergency response levels (ERLs) to designate which activities will take place in the event of imminent or actual threats affecting the State of Alaska. The State Veterinarian will, on a continuing basis, assimilate information relative to the presence of diseases in other countries, the United States, and Alaska, and shall activate the appropriate ERL to alleviate the threat.

A daily level of preparedness which includes routine monitoring and surveillance will be maintained during the interim.

A. Emergency Response Level 1 (ERL 1). An emergency animal disease or an emerging threat to animal agriculture has been identified in the United States, or contiguous countries, but has not been identified in Alaska. ERL 1 activities will continue until the threat has been removed from the United States or until the threat has escalated to a threshold requiring greater response.

In the event of an ERL 1, the office of the Alaska State Veterinarian may:

1. Notify the Office of the Governor and the director of Alaska Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management (ADHS&EM) that an emergency animal disease is present in the United States or contiguous country.
2. Notify the AVIC and other appropriate state and federal animal health emergency response personnel and keep them apprised of any changing events
3. Identify operational support needs and coordinate with ADHS&EM to provide operational and logistical support.
4. As appropriate, impose animal movement restrictions by emergency order.
5. Notify appropriate industry groups and animal agriculture businesses of the presence of the emergency animal disease threat and request their support to keep infected and exposed animals out of the state.
6. Implement a public information plan.

ERL 1 level of response will continue until the threat has been eliminated or until ERL 2 is required.

B. Emergency Response Level 2 (ERL 2). An emergency animal disease or a new emerging disease has been confirmed, or a highly-likely case has been discovered in Alaska, or exposed animals have been imported into the state.

In the event of an ERL 2, the office of the Alaska State Veterinarian will:

1. Accomplish objectives 1-6 listed for ERL 1.
2. State and federal animal health officials in Alaska will request disease control assistance from the USDA, APHIS, VS and request activation of a disease control task force.
3. As appropriate, declare an animal disease emergency and coordinate with ADHS&EM to request an emergency proclamation by the Governor.

V. RESPONSE AGENCY ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

A. Primary Agency

The Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation, Division of Environmental Health (location of the office of the State Veterinarian) is the lead agency in any animal health related emergency.

B. Support Agencies

1. Local Government- municipality, borough, city, tribe, regional tribal corporation. Local emergency management officials will be actively involved in the response and will be utilized. Boroughs, municipalities and tribes may have comprehensive emergency management plans which provide the framework for the jurisdiction's response to emergencies and disasters. Boroughs, municipalities and tribes may utilize their resources and provide an additional line of communication with local farmers, industry groups and community.

2. State Agencies

a. Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation, Division of Environmental Health (ADEC-DEH) will:

1. Assign the emergency response level to the incident.
2. In consultation with the AVIC, determine the scope and level of initial response and initiate an ICS task force.
3. In consultation with the AVIC, determine the location and size of quarantine areas.
4. Establish quarantine area(s) and issue quarantine orders as needed.
5. In consultation with the AVIC, strategically assign duties and areas of responsibility to state and federal veterinarians, livestock inspectors, animal health technicians, private veterinarians, active duty veterinary corps and reserve corps veterinarians.
6. Determine appropriate movement restrictions for animals, people, equipment, feeds, commodities, and conveyances
7. Notify ADHS&EM and allied parties when a livestock disease sample being sent to the Foreign Animal Disease Diagnostic Lab (FADDL, Plum Island, NY) for analysis is highly likely to be a highly contagious or infectious disease or agent.
8. Assist ADHS&EM, USDA, Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities, Department of Public Safety-Division of Alaska State Troopers, local jurisdictions, tribes, tribal organizations and other agencies as needed in cooperating in the location of a staging area(s) outside of the quarantined area.
9. Conduct livestock disease assessments at the site of the event to determine needs and priorities.
10. Coordinate state-level livestock disease emergency response and recovery activities.
11. Prioritize activities and areas of greatest urgency for state response and recovery personnel in the field.
12. Coordinate with USDA, APHIS, VS staff and provide liaison between other federal, state and local organizations when required.
13. Direct disease investigations, epidemiological investigations and trace outs to determine source of disease and scope of disease outbreak.
14. Identify contaminated feed, livestock, and agricultural products that must be destroyed and disposed of or decontaminated. Select method of destruction or euthanasia.
15. Identify and approve animal carcass disposal sites.
16. Identify and approve sites for burning animal carcasses, contaminated feed, or other items that are contaminated.
17. Identify and approve temporary waste disposal sites for effluent from cleaning and disinfecting stations.
18. Coordinate with appropriate organizations for the deployment of inspectors and veterinarians for agricultural response and recovery.
19. Establish and/or coordinate appropriate regulatory controls.
20. Provide advisories and related public information.
21. Coordinate with Alaska State Troopers, county and local law enforcement, National Guard, U.S. Armed Forces for site security and related issues.
22. Maintain ongoing animal agriculture surveillance of affected communities in order to rapidly identify and address disease-related problems.

- b. Alaska Department of Homeland Security & Emergency Management (ADHS&EM) may:
1. Support DEC-DEH by providing statewide coordination for logistical support, security, biosecurity, support personnel, procurement of supplies, equipment, vehicles, food, lodging, and administrative support during livestock disease response and recovery emergencies.
 2. Coordinate public information efforts throughout the emergency.
 3. Coordinate with DEC-DEH for the provision of biosecurity training to support agencies and provide biosecurity training to agency personnel designated for operations in the affected area.
- c. Alaska Department of Public Safety, Division of Alaska State Troopers may:
1. Provide law enforcement support to conduct traffic checkpoints and roadblocks, and, secure quarantined areas and related sites during livestock disease emergencies.
 2. Coordinate with local law enforcement throughout response and recovery.
 3. Provide law enforcement support as requested.
- d. Alaska Department of Health and Social Services may:
1. Coordinate with DEC-DEH, Regional Tribal Health Corporations, CDC (Alaska office) if a zoonotic condition exists.
 2. Support public information efforts.
 3. Support biosecurity training for personnel at the site based upon training provided by DEC-DEH/ USDA.
 4. Provide veterinary and epidemiologic support to DEC-DEH as requested during the emergency.
 5. Provide mental health staff to assist in crisis counseling efforts.
- e. Department of Environmental Conservation (Solid Waste, Air and Water, Contaminate Sites) may:
1. Assist and coordinate with DEC-DEH on subjects such as carcass disposal, cleaning and disinfection and other issues that may influence soil, water, and air quality.
 2. Liaison with Environmental Protection Agency to address issues that may arise.
- f. Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) may:
1. Provide disease surveillance in free-ranging wildlife and wildlife in zoos, parks, and other natural areas.
 2. Survey for and/or dispose of contaminated items and wild animals.
 3. Conduct wild animal inventories in the area of a disease event to identify susceptible species.
 4. In collaboration with the State Veterinarian, collect animals, specimens, and samples for disease testing to determine presence of disease or impact of disease on wildlife.

5. In consultation and cooperation with the State Veterinarian, conduct disease control and elimination activities in wildlife.
6. Support public information efforts throughout the emergency.
7. Provide biosecurity training to personnel designated for operations in the affected area based upon training provided by DEC-DEH and USDA.
8. Support animal movement restrictions in Alaska throughout the emergency.
9. Assist DEC-DEH with law enforcement support as requested.
10. Assist with euthanasia procedures for infected livestock or wild animals.
11. Assist with the disposal of infected livestock or wild animals.

g. Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities (ADOTPF) may:

1. Assist in the movement of state resources during livestock disease emergencies.
2. Provide traffic control and routing assistance, barricades, and road monitoring.
3. Provide equipment and operators to assist with animal disposal.

h. Department of Administration may:

1. Assist in the identification of resource providers and in purchasing of supplies, equipment and services needed during a state-level livestock disease emergency.

i. Alaska National Guard:

The National Guard may be called upon for support in the following areas:

1. Assist Alaska State Troopers with law enforcement assignments.
2. Assist with cleaning, disinfection of equipment, facilities and the decontamination of personnel working at the site based upon DEC-DEH and USDA guidance.
3. Assist with recovery operations.

j. University of Alaska:

1. The Cooperative Extension Service will provide reliable coordination, communication, and information dissemination between the EOC, the industry groups and local communities during emergencies.
2. Assist DEC-EH Laboratory with diagnostic services.

3. Federal Agencies

a. United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) may:

1. Assist in disease eradication activities including quarantine, evaluation, slaughter, disposal, cleaning and disinfecting, epidemiology, vector control and transportation permitting arrangements.
2. Consult with state and local authorities regarding eradication proceedings.
3. Collect, analyze, and disseminate technical and logistical information.
4. Define training requirements for casual employees or support agencies involved in eradication operations.
5. Issue a declaration of extraordinary emergency.
6. Define the infected area and control zones.
7. Prepare information for dissemination to the public, producers, processors and other concerned groups.

8. Allocate funding for compensation to the owner(s) of culled animals.
9. Define restrictions on interstate commerce.

b. Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

The Federal Emergency Management Agency may implement the Federal Response Plan (FRP) if conditions are warranted. The conditions required for FEMA involvement are usually large scale natural disasters, e.g., flooding, earthquake, etc. The FRP provides a mechanism for organizing, coordinating, and mobilizing federal resources to augment state and local resources.

c. Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

One of FDA's mandates is to protect the public health by assuring the safety of our nation's food supply. The FDA has launched major initiatives to prevent the spread of these food-related infections. These initiatives promote safer food-handling practices by producers and consumers, and more effective detection, tracking and prevention of food-borne illness. FDA may assist state and local authorities in disease eradication activities and/or food-borne illness emergency investigations.

1. Coordinate with DEC-EH Division of Food Safety in the event of a food safety issue.

d. Food Safety Inspection Service (FSIS).

The FSIS is charged with protecting the Nation's food supply by providing inspectors and veterinarians in meat, poultry, and egg product plants and at ports-of-entry to prevent, detect, and act in response to food safety emergencies. FSIS has developed the infrastructure needed to confront new biosecurity challenges. FSIS may assist state and local authorities in disease eradication activities and/or food-borne illness emergency investigations.

1. Coordinate with DEC-EH Division of Food Safety in the event of a food safety issue.

e. US Armed Forces (Army, Air Force, Coast Guard)

US Armed Forces may aid in law enforcement, facilitate logistics with transportation and/or heavy equipment, and assist with disease eradication activities within appropriate jurisdictions.

4. Tribal Relations.

A representative from Tribal governments and Regional Tribal Health Association may assist in the coordination of response activities in areas that may potentially impact Tribal lands.

5. Volunteer and Industry Groups.

Volunteer groups such as The Red Cross, Humane Societies, Animal Shelters, and Industry groups such as the Veterinary Medical Associations, Alaska Farm Bureau, Diversified Livestock Association, Alaska Bird Rescue, Alaska Equine Rescue may provide resources such as personnel, equipment, technical assistance, rescue and

sheltering, planning, training, animal medical care and public health issues. Activities will be coordinated via liaison with the Incident Command.

The Alaska livestock industry groups (i.e. producer organizations, livestock markets, slaughtering establishments, renderers and other allied groups) may, upon request from the DEC-DEH:

1. Act as liaison on matters relating to livestock industries affected by an animal disease outbreak such as participate as members of state and local jurisdiction planning teams and assist state and local jurisdictions in the response and recovery phases of emergencies.
2. Provide assistance to families affected by quarantine, euthanasia, and disposal activities during the emergency.
3. Provide support for disease control and eradication activities.
4. Provide appropriate information for dissemination to industries and the public.
5. Identify individuals who may be qualified to assist with disease control efforts.
6. Develop a list of qualified appraisers.
7. Support exercises and drills as a participant during the exercise and design period and conduct of the event. Include state and local jurisdictions in business and industry activities.

VI. CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS

The State Veterinarian, in cooperation with the AVIC, will direct all animal disease investigation, surveillance, diagnostic, biosecurity, animal depopulation, carcass disposal, cleaning/disinfection and recovery activities. Primary and support agencies will coordinate through the State Veterinarian and ADHS&EM. In the event of activation of the plan, the National Interagency Incident Management System (NIIMS) will be implemented. A Unified Incident Command structure will be instituted at the state Emergency Operations Center (EOC) and an Incident Command Team will be established at the outbreak area(s) to ensure the most effective response and use of personnel and equipment.

A. Mitigation and Preparedness.

1. The State Veterinarian's office may:

a. Develop Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) agreements with government agencies, professional associations and private agencies and organizations.

b. Provide for surveillance for foreign animal disease or an animal disease, syndrome, chemical, poison or toxin that may pose a substantial threat to the animal industries, economy or public health of the state.

c. Conduct training sessions and workshops to assist local communities and support agencies and organizations.

d. Coordinate with ADHS&EM in identifying animal friendly shelter sites near approved emergency shelters.

e. Participate in and/or conduct exercises and tests.

f. Work to develop county and local plans and resources.

B. Response and Recovery.

1. The State Veterinarian's office may:

a. Serve as the primary agency and fulfill all associated responsibilities including, but not limited to, the restriction of livestock/animal movement; coordinate local emergency response teams with the statewide support network and support both intrastate and interstate mutual aid agreements.

d. Manage and direct evacuation of animals from risk areas and provide technical assistance to prevent animal injury and disease dissemination.

e. Requisition personnel and equipment to triage and shelter facilities.

f. Secure supplies, equipment, personnel and technical assistance from support agencies, organizations and other resources to carry out the response plans associated with animal health emergency management or any act of agro-terrorism that may pose a substantial threat to the state.

g. Provide technical assistance to the established pet shelters and/or other areas.

h. Provide and augment services to affect a rapid recovery.

i. Restore equipment and supplies to normal state of readiness.

j. Resume day-to-day operations.

VII. AUTHORITY AND POLICY

The Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation, Division of Environmental Health, in accordance with Alaska State law, specifically Alaska Revised Statutes, has the authority to:

1. Declare an animal health emergency.

2. Impose restrictions on importations of animals, articles, and means of conveyance.

3. Quarantine animals, herds, parts of the state, the entire state, and create quarantine areas.

4. Stop the movement of animals.

5. Require the destruction of animals, animal products, and materials.

6. Specify the method for destruction and disposal of animals, products and materials.

7. Indemnify owners for animals destroyed.

8. Employ deputy state veterinarians and livestock inspectors.

The legal authority for the U.S. Department of Agriculture's response procedures identified in this plan may be found in U.S. Code Title 21, Chapter 4, Subchapter III.

Acts of terrorism may be directed to the nation's food supply, either as the target or as a vehicle of chemical and biologic weapons of mass destruction. Acts of terrorism are a federal crime and the response to such events are authorized and outlined in the United States Government Interagency Domestic Terrorism Concept of Operations (i.e. the CONPLAN). The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) is recognized as the primary federal agency in acts of terrorism. All other activities will proceed as consequences of such an event as described in the CONPLAN. The event will proceed according to the Federal Emergency Operation Plan, the extraordinary state of emergency and the state emergency operations plans.

Recognizing that the ability to respond to and recover from emergency events is a result of mitigation, planning, training and exercise, all primary and support agencies will participate in such activities to maintain a state of readiness.