Foreign Animal Disease Guidance #1: Foreign Animal Disease Preparedness

Section 1: Overview

The occurrence of a foreign animal disease (FAD) in the U.S. could devastate the food animal industries. In the event of an outbreak, it is likely that live animal movement, product movement, and exports would be halted for an unknown amount of time. Being prepared for an outbreak situation can help keep plants running or shorten the amount of time that movement or exports are stalled in the event a foreign animal disease is discovered in the U.S.

Beef, pork, and lamb slaughter establishments are unique compared to live animal production units in FAD detection, as they will operate under the oversight of two governmental bodies, the Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) and the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Services (APHIS), if a foreign animal disease is detected. Additionally, State Animal Health Officials (SAHO) have jurisdiction in their respective state in the event of an outbreak and will work with APHIS to facilitate response activities. The establishment must work cooperatively with all regulatory agencies to ensure that all necessary steps are taken in an FAD response, as well as the subsequent steps required to continue normal business operations after an outbreak is contained.

This guidance document will aid beef, pork, and lamb slaughter establishments in implementing practices that will help slaughter facilities prepare for an FAD outbreak in the U.S. before such an outbreak occurs.

Section 2: Steps to Take to Prepare for an FAD Outbreak

1. **Establish a relationship with your State Animal Health Official.** The State Animal Health Official is usually the State Veterinarian in your state. It is important that management at slaughter facilities know who this person is, and how to contact them. Contacting your state’s SAHO is an important step in FAD preparedness so the SAHO is familiar with you and your facility, and can have open and productive conversations in the event of an outbreak.

2. **Obtain a Premise Identification Number (PIN) from your State Animal Health Official.** A PIN includes a valid 911 physical address and a
set of matching coordinates (latitude and longitude) reflecting the actual location of the animals on a premise.\(^1\) The PIN is not the same number as an establishment number. A PIN will help SAHOs make decisions about whether or not animals can move during an outbreak. A PIN is required for both the premise of origin and the destination in order for movement to occur. Obtaining a PIN will help develop a relationship between the slaughter facility and the SAHO.

3. **Review your current biosecurity plan, and devise an enhanced biosecurity plan for use in the event of an outbreak.** In the event of a foreign animal disease (FAD) outbreak, biosecurity measures on all facilities which house animals for even a brief period of time will be heightened. Existing procedures may not account for these increased precautions. See NAMI Foreign Animal Disease Guidance Document #3, Biosecurity Measures, for more information on enhanced biosecurity during an FAD outbreak.

4. **Maintain 30 Days of records for live animal movement to and from the facility.** In the event an FAD outbreak occurs in your area, or an FAD investigation occurs at your plant, APHIS and the SAHO will likely request information that can be used to trace animals back to their farm of origin. At least 30 days of receiving records should be available for use when an FAD outbreak or investigation occurs.

5. **Familiarize management and designated employees with the clinical signs of various foreign animal diseases**, specifically Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD), Classical Swine Fever (CSF), and African Swine Fever (ASF). It is essential that plant employees are familiar with the clinical signs of diseases so that if observed, animals be sorted out and reported to FSIS immediately. Refer to NAMI Foreign Animal Disease Guidance Document #4, Clinical Signs of Foreign Animal Diseases, for more information on clinical signs of FADs.

6. **Familiarize management with Secure Food Supply plans.** If an FAD is found in U.S. livestock, state and federal regulatory officials will limit the movement of animals and animal products to control the spread of these very contagious animal diseases. The Secure Food Supply Continuity of Business Plans provide opportunities to voluntarily prepare before an outbreak.\(^2\) This will better position premises with animals that have no evidence of infection to:

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a. Move animals to processing or another pork production premises under a movement permit issued by regulatory officials, and
b. Maintain business continuity during an FAD Outbreak.

7. **Participate in an FAD preparedness exercise.** Foreign animal disease exercises can be held on the company, county, state, or federal level or with multiple levels involved. These exercises simulate an FAD outbreak, and encourage participants to think and solve problems that will only otherwise come to light during an outbreak. Many times, more questions than answers are generated during such exercises, but it is important for slaughter facilities to attend and observe these events. A company can request to be part of a state- or federally-organized FAD exercise by contacting their State Animal Health Official. Additionally, a company can request a table-top exercise be organized specifically for their company, if desired. If you would like to host an FAD exercise, contact Dr. Patrick Webb with the National Pork Board.³

**Section 3: Conclusion**

This guidance document is meant to aid beef, pork, and lamb slaughter establishments in implementing practices that will help slaughter facilities be as prepared as possible for an FAD outbreak in the U.S. **before** such an outbreak occurs. If you have questions or concerns about this document or anything else regarding foreign animal disease, please contact Tiffany Lee at 202-587-4248, or tlee@meatinstitute.org.

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