

Animal Health Bulletin

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Division of Animal Industry

Request to Florida Veterinarians

By Dr. Thomas Holt, State Veterinarian/Director

The Florida Veterinary Medical Association, the University of Florida, College of Veterinary Medicine, and the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services are working together to establish a volunteer corps of private veterinarians and veterinary technicians who will support response measures in the event of an emergency involving animals and animal health.

Florida is continually threatened by natural disasters such as hurricanes and wildfires, by the introduction of foreign emerging animal diseases, and by potential acts of bioterrorism. These risks all affect animal health and safety, public health and safety, and our state and national economies.

In the aftermath of any emergency, veterinarians and veterinary technicians may be needed to assist local, state, and national response teams in meeting the needs of our animals and people. These professionals would be a part of our State Agricultural Response Team (SART) serving under Emergency Support Function (ESF) 17 and our State Emergency Response Team (SERT).

Veterinary staff may serve in assessing veterinary response capabilities and provide emergency animal care in the aftermath of a natural disaster, and may assist in support of emergency disease surveillance and control efforts. Although this program is unable to provide salary or benefits to its volunteers, their work would be covered under state liability and Workers' Compensation programs.

Florida has a very strong veterinary community. This volunteer program would provide greater resources and enhance our animal emergency response capabilities. Please consider joining the Florida Veterinary Medical Association, the University of Florida, College of Veterinary Medicine, and the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services in support of this program. This program will be rolled out at the Florida Veterinary Medical Association's 78th Annual Conference, September 7-9, 2007, in Lake Buena Vista. Personnel will be available to discuss this program and answer your questions.

We hope you will give serious consideration to volunteering as part of this important program. ■



Florida Department
of Agriculture and
Consumer Services

Charles H. Bronson,
Commissioner

New Laboratory Numbers

Kissimmee Diagnostic
Lab
321-697-1400

Live Oak Diagnostic
Lab
386-330-5700

Florida's Feral Swine Trappers

By Dr. Pamela Hunter, Swine, Poultry and Small Ruminants Program Manager

The hog is not a native American livestock species and was introduced to our shores by settlers from Spain and Europe. Their numbers have grown to where there are now an estimated 4 million feral swine, spread out over 39 states, with an estimated 1 million in Florida. Though some of the animals have a distinctive "wild boar" appearance, others may look no different than many breeds of domestic hogs. Where they do well, they have a clear-cut impact on that region, causing widespread damage to the natural environment and domestic animals through competition for food, habitat destruction and disease spread.

Hunting and trapping feral swine is not only a popular sport in Florida but a useful tool in man's attempt to control the feral population on private and state lands. Feral swine carry several diseases that can be transmitted to domestic livestock and/or man including Brucellosis and Pseudorabies, two highly contagious diseases. Feral swine are most

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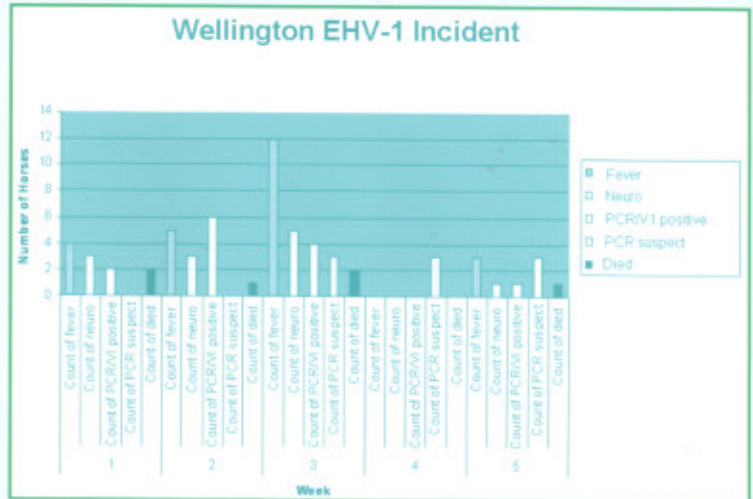
Wellington EHV-1 Outbreak

By Dr. Michael Short, Equine Program Manager

Florida had a potentially devastating outbreak of Equine Herpes Virus-Type 1 (EHV-1) in Palm Beach County during the winter of 2006-2007. The neuropathogenic strain of EHV-1 entered Florida in a shipment of horses that originated from the international import center in New York in late November 2006. The neurological strain of EHV-1 has been emerging as a significant disease concern in the United States' horse population in recent years. This particular strain of the EHV-1 virus is more virulent and affects the central nervous system in a higher percentage of infected horses and results in a higher mortality rate than does the non-neuropathogenic strains.

Many difficult issues surfaced during the outbreak including economic concerns, disease management and biosecurity protocols, vaccination recommendations, and management of misinformation. Due to the hard work of many in the industry, the most serious consequences such as significant spread of the disease resulting in increased horse deaths, cancellation of statewide equine events, and embargo of Florida horses by other states were avoided.

The Division implemented an emergency response and an incident command post was established on December 21, 2006 in Palm Beach County to effectively manage the outbreak. Emergency responders worked diligently with the Florida equine community including veterinarians, horse owners, show venues, equine groups,



the University of Florida, and many others. Division personnel worked through the holiday season putting in more than 4,000 man-hours during this outbreak until the last premises was released from quarantine on January 20, 2007.

In all, 10 premises were officially quarantined, 18 horses were infected or presumed to be infected, and 6 horses died during the outbreak. Even though Wellington is an area that has thousands of horses in a small area resulting in a high potential for disease transmission, and this outbreak coincided with the start of the show season, the efforts of all involved resulted in minimal impact to the equine industry.

Florida's Feral Swine Trappers

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often the source of Brucellosis infection in domestic swine and cattle. Feral swine trappers and hunters can contract Swine Brucellosis by handling infected tissue.

Pseudorabies is a viral disease carried by feral swine that can lead to high death rates in domestic pigs and may affect other domestic and wild animals. While humans are not affected, death can occur in hunting dogs that come in direct contact with infected feral swine.

Trichinellosis is a parasitic disease of public health importance. Human infections are caused by eating infected meat that has not been well cooked. Hunters are at risk of becoming infected with these diseases if precautions are not taken when they dress feral pigs. Safety measures should include wearing disposable gloves when dressing and cleaning pigs, avoiding direct contact with blood and reproductive organs, appropriate disposal of gloves and the remains from the dressed hog, and cleaning up with hot water and soap after butchering.

Any individuals trapping feral swine in Florida must register with the Department as a Feral Swine Dealer (FSD) if they transport swine on public roads. The registered FSD will receive an identification card that must be carried when moving feral swine. The card is good for one year. The dealer must also keep accurate records of all swine movements and make them available to any law enforcement officer or authorized agent of the Department upon request. These records must include movement date, where the animals were trapped, number of animals, and destination. The registered FSD must limit relocation to areas or premises where there will be no direct contact with domestic swine herds. Anyone holding feral swine must register their facility as an Approved Feral Swine Holding Facility and ensure that feral swine are maintained to prevent the spread of disease.

To learn more, contact the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Division of Animal Industry, 407 South Calhoun Street, Tallahassee, FL 32399, 850-410-0900 or go to our Web site: www.doacs.state.fl.us/ai.

All About the Bureau of Animal Disease Control

By Dr. Diane Kitchen, Cattle Programs Manager

The Bureau of Animal Disease Control is responsible for enforcing animal health regulations in Florida and protecting the state from animal pests and diseases which could have major economic and public health consequences. The Bureau strives to form good working relationships with other organizations and associations linked to our respective industries and has Emergency Support Function (ESF-17) responsibilities that are enhanced by these relationships.

In order to complete our mission, the State Veterinarian, Bureau Chief, Diagnostic Veterinary Medical Officers, Program Managers, District Supervisors, Specialists, Inspectors, Poultry Liaison, and field staff in six districts implement Bureau responsibilities.

All of the Bureau's Diagnostic Veterinary Medical Officers, and most of the Program Managers, are certified as Foreign Animal Disease Diagnosticians (FADDs). Both groups serve on numerous state and national committees and advisory boards and work with a diverse range of animal industry associations. Diagnostic Veterinary Medical Officers are involved in disease investigations, import/export regulations such as CEM testing, and tracing of reactor animals and tissue residue violations. These veterinarians are particularly important in the surveillance for foreign animal and reportable diseases.

Program Managers develop plans to monitor and oversee the surveillance, vaccination, and training necessary to protect and safeguard animal and public health as well as maintaining market access for Florida's animals and animal products. They also administer Cooperative Agreements with USDA-APHIS which aid the Bureau in monitoring and controlling diseases such as Avian Influenza, Brucellosis, Johne's, Tuberculosis and others. This requires quarterly and annual reports demonstrating completion of objectives, updates and revisions of work plans, annual application for new or continued agreements and coordination of activities with our federal counterparts. Program Managers also provide educational and training opportunities to staff and the public on specific timely topics such as livestock cruelty and neglect training and species-specific health concerns, animal management and animal handling.

The Bureau's Poultry Liaison serves statewide as a link between the Bureau and the poultry industry and acts as the state representative for the National Poultry Improvement Plan overseeing and conducting routine inspections and blood testing in participating breeder flocks and hatcheries as well as testing and health inspections at statewide exhibitions and county fairs. Regular training exercises are conducted for staff and poultry representatives.

District Supervisors, Specialists, Inspectors, and other field staff, are involved in the inspection of livestock sales and markets, suspect disease situations, retesting of suspect animals, surveillance for ticks, responding to citizen concerns, and ESF-17 emergency response activities as part of Florida's Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan. Planning, response and coordination efforts are an important responsibility involving emergencies ranging from natural disasters to devastating disease outbreaks. Staff also works with state and county State Agricultural Response Team (SART) programs to maximize the response to disasters within the state and assist with disasters in neighboring states.

The Bureau also works closely with private, practicing veterinarians in several surveillance programs such as Brucellosis, EEE, EIA, WNV, CEM and Piroplasmiasis for the testing of those diseases.

Any suspicious foreign or reportable animal disease cases should be reported to the Office of the State Veterinarian. This information is entered into the Bureau's database and investigation is followed up by Program Managers. To report a possible foreign or animal disease, call 1-877-815-0034 or e-mail: rad@doacs.state.fl.us.

Program Manager Contact Information:

Cattle: Dr. Diane Kitchen-(850)410-0940

Equine: Dr. Mike Short-(850)410-0901

Poultry/Swine/Small Ruminants: Dr. Pam Hunter-(850) 410-0947; Jennifer Jennings-Glover (Poultry Liaison)-(850) 251-1226

Companion Animals/Permitting: Dr. Sam Lamb-(850)410-0950

District Office Contacts – Supervisors and Diagnostic Veterinary Medical Officers:

District 1: (Bay, Calhoun, Escambia, Franklin, Gadsden, Gulf, Holmes, Jackson, Leon, Liberty, Okaloosa, Santa Rosa, Wakulla, Walton, and Washington Counties)

Dennis Stokes: Supervisor-(850) 718-0459, **Dr. Keary "Mark" Krause: DVMO-**(850) 718-0459

District 2: (Alachua, Baker, Bradford, Clay, Columbia, Duval, Hamilton, Jefferson, Lafayette, Madison, Nassau, St. Johns, Suwannee, Taylor, and Union Counties)

Bill Banner: Supervisor-(386) 330-5751, **Dr. Hank Doten: DVMO-**(352) 745-2544

Continued on page 4

District 3: (Citrus, Dixie, Flagler, Gilchrist, Lake, Levy, Marion, Putman, Seminole, Sumter, and Volusia Counties) **Frank Markham: Supervisor-**(352) 620-3441, **Dr. John Jones: DVMO-**(352)620-3441

District 4: (Brevard, Hillsborough, Hernando, Indian River, Osceola, Orange, Pinellas, Pasco, and Polk Counties)
Jimmy Carter: Supervisor-(863) 519-8506,
Dr. John Crews: DVMO-(863) 519-8663

District 5: (Charlotte, Collier, Desoto, Hardee, Hendry, Lee, Manatee, and Sarasota Counties)

John Court: Supervisor-(863) 993-4732, **Dr. John Irby: DVMO-**(863) 519-8507

District 6: (Broward, Dade, Glades, Highlands, Martin, Monroe, Okeechobee, Palm Beach, and St. Lucie Counties) **Victor Crews: Supervisor-**(863) 462-5171, **Dr. Julie Gauthier: DVMO-**(352) 333-3120

USDA/APHIS/VS Area Office: (352) 333-3120
Office of Agricultural Law Enforcement: Colonel Darrell Liford, Director, (850) 245-1300; After-hour emergencies: 1-800-342-5869 ■



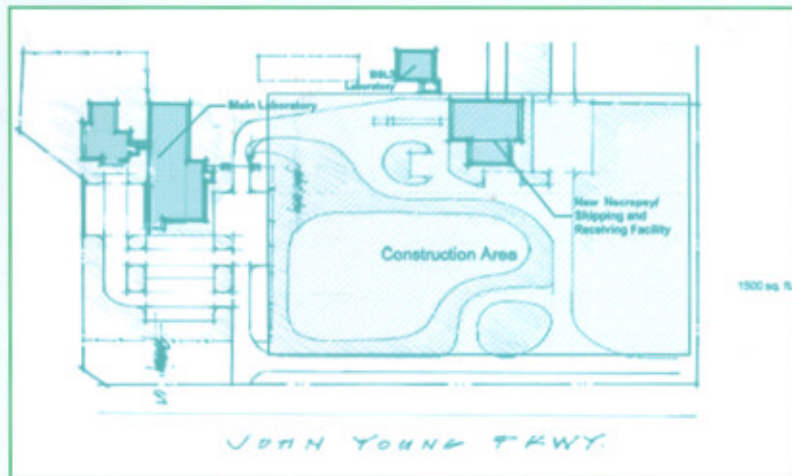
New Kissimmee Laboratory Construction

By Mark Markley, Construction Project Consultant

Last year, the Florida Legislature funded the preparation of plans and specifications for a new necropsy laboratory and shipping/receiving facility to be constructed at the Kissimmee Animal Disease Diagnostic Laboratory. The Division of Animal Industry contracted with the architectural firm of Reynolds, Smith and Hills, Inc., to develop the project documents. In the period from July 2006 to April 2007, the plans and specifications were completed.

This year, the Florida Legislature funded \$2.5 million for project construction. The Division of Animal Industry intends to construct all of the project site work and the shipping/receiving suite using the current funding. The project architects are revising the documents completed in April of this year to reflect a project to be constructed in two phases. The first phase will take approximately twelve months to construct. The second phase, if funded by the Florida Legislature in July of next year, will construct the necropsy laboratory and will require approximately eight months to complete.

Biltmore Construction has been selected as the project Construction Manager (CM). The CM contract is being processed in Tallahassee and should be fully executed by



August 20, 2007. Reynolds, Smith and Hills will complete the Phase I revisions for project plans and specifications and the initial project coordination meeting in August. This schedule should enable the commencement of construction by mid September 2007.

The project will be a Guaranteed Maximum Price (GMP) project wherein the project actual costs cannot exceed the budget unless the State increases the project scope of work after the State accepts the GMP. ■



Johne's Rapid Fecal Culture

By Kelli Cook and Nanie Papa, Biological Scientists, and Dr. James Maxwell, Interim Chief, Bureau of Diagnostic Laboratories

A practicing veterinarian recommended an animal owner submit feces from his ill bison to Live Oak Lab for a Johne's fecal culture. The animal owner had recently purchased the adult bull at a livestock sale and apparently commingled the bison on his property with other hoof stock. The practitioner had provisionally diagnosed Johne's disease based on clinical signs, including chronic, watery diarrhea and progressive weight loss with concurrent excellent appetite. Testing the feces was initiated on rapid (liquid) Johne's culture the same day of the in-person sample delivery by the owner. For this slow-growing *Mycobacterium*, rapid culture normally cultures for 9 to 49 days versus regular (solid) culture incubation taking 12 to 16 weeks. At day three into culture, the *Mycobacterium* culture instrument indicated a positive result in all culture

tubes for this sample. Subsequent real-time PCR on the organism confirmed *Mycobacterium avium* subspecies paratuberculosis, the causative organism for Johne's disease. It can be assumed this animal was fecal-shedding onto his surroundings significant amounts of potential disease-causing organisms. This case may demonstrate the utility of the reduced turnaround time for rapid Johne's culture that might assist herd management for livestock producers. At this time, Live Oak Lab provides both rapid and regular Johne's diagnostic fecal culture as well as Johne's ELISA serology testing. Johne's ELISA is currently subsidized for approved herds participating in the Florida Voluntary Johne's Disease Program. For additional Johne's testing information or Johne's sample submission guidelines, please call (386) 330-5700. ■

Euthanasia by Kissimmee Lab Veterinarians

By Dr. James Maxwell
Interim Chief, Bureau of Diagnostic Laboratories

Kissimmee Diagnostic Laboratory has the capability to perform euthanasia on livestock and poultry brought to the laboratory unless it is unsafe or impractical. Requests for euthanasia should be directed to the assigned case veterinarian. The case veterinarian will consult with the owner or person making the delivery of the animal and after assessing the practicality and safety of carrying out the requested euthanasia make a determination as to whether the euthanasia can be performed. If the decision is not to euthanize the animal, this decision and the reasons for the decision will be documented and conveyed to the Laboratory Director, Bureau Chief, and Division Director.

Euthanasia will be performed in a humane manner using approved methods as prescribed by the American Veterinary Medical Association. This change in policy is intended to increase

diagnostic services to livestock and poultry producers and provide for a humane means of euthanasia. Generally, these services will be directed at young or smaller livestock such as calves, goats, sheep, piglets and poultry which can be handled safely and efficiently. The euthanasia of companion animals, dogs and cats, is usually carried out by a private veterinarian. In some cases, however, the assigned case veterinarian may determine that a companion animal may be euthanized at the laboratory for humanitarian reasons.

In all cases, a signed permission form by the owner or the person bringing the animal to the laboratory must be obtained prior to the euthanasia. If a laboratory case veterinarian determines that carrying out the euthanasia is unsafe or impractical, this will be explained to the owner or person delivering the animal to the laboratory by the case veterinarian. ■

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Phone: 850/410-0914, Fax: 850/410-0915, E-mail: gardnej@doacs.state.fl.us

Emergency Contact Information

The Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Division of Animal Industry, works hard to ensure the safety of all Floridians through its vital animal disease programs. If you know or suspect a case of foreign or emerging significant contagious infectious disease in pets or livestock, please contact the office of the State Veterinarian.

If you have any questions, input or reports, please contact us at:

Animal Industry/State Veterinarian, M-F, 8-5	850-410-0900 877-815-0034
Animal Industry's Kissimmee Laboratory, M-F, 8-5	321-697-1400
Animal Industry's Live Oak Laboratory, M-F, 8-5	386-330-5700
Agricultural Law Enforcement, M-F, 8-5	850-245-1300
Agricultural Law Enforcement After-hours	800-342-5869
Department of Health, M-F, 8-5	850-245-4250
USDA/APHIS, M-F, 8-5	352-333-3120

Prevention, Control, Eradication

www.doacs.state.fl.us/ai



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