
**Brakke Consulting's
Animal Health News & Notes for February 17, 2006**
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IN THE NEWS:

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COMPANY NEWS RELEASES

> **Merial** and **Boehringer Ingelheim Vetmedica** announced a partnership between the Merial SureHealth Calf Preconditioning Program and **IMI Global**. The partnership will offer cattle producers source and age verification for cattle enrolled in the SureHealth Program via IMI's patent-pending program, USVerified SupplyVerified. (*company press release*)

> **Merial** announced the launch of IGENITY ParentMATCH MultiSIRE test, which can identify parentage in multiple-sire settings and help calculate within-herd expected progeny differences for economically important traits. (*company press release*)

> India's **Orchid Chemicals and Pharmaceuticals Limited** announced the signing of a long term Master Research and Development agreement with **Pfizer** International for animal health products. The agreement would be in force for seven years and renewable thereafter. The agreement also provided for addition of new products and services from time to time. (*WebIndia123*)

> **ABAXIS**, Inc. announced the release of the Equine Profile Plus with Electrolytes diagnostic rotor for use with the next generation VetScan VS2 and the VetScan Legacy blood chemistry analyzers. This new VetScan diagnostic test panel now allows for the measurement of sodium,

potassium and tCO₂ emphasizing increased utility in the assessment of sick animals. (*company website*)

> **Nutro Products**, Inc. announced that it has signed a definitive agreement for a management-led buyout by **Bain Capital Partners** LLC, a global private investment firm. Nutro Products and Bain Capital emphasized that they intend to maintain Nutro's exclusive commitment to the pet specialty store channel. Terms of the agreement were not disclosed. (*Petfood Industry Online*)

SIGN UP NOW TO ATTEND BRAKKE CONSULTING'S 2006 INDUSTRY OVERVIEW - LAST CHANCE

Western Veterinary Conference - Las Vegas

Tuesday, February 21

8:30am - 10:30am

Four Seasons hotel adjacent to the Mandalay Bay

Registration is \$350 for the first company attendee and \$325 for additional attendees at the same presentation. To register, visit our website at www.BrakkeConsulting.com, or call Jane Morgan at 972-243-4033 or email jmorgan@brakkeconsulting.com.

ANIMAL HEALTH NEWS

> GERMANY - AVIAN INFLUENZA Germany reported that two wild swans found on the island of Ruegen in the Baltic Sea were infected with the lethal H5N1 strain of the avian influenza virus. (*FoodProductionDaily.com*)

> AUSTRIA - AVIAN INFLUENZA Austria reported its first cases of H5N1 avian influenza, in two dead swans found near the city of Graz in the southern part of the country. (*Meating Place*)

> GREECE - AVIAN INFLUENZA Greece reported cases of H5N1 avian influenza in three dead swans. The swans were found in three separate areas around the Thermaikos Gulf south of the northern port city of Thessaloniki. (*AnimalNet - Reuters*)

> ITALY - AVIAN INFLUENZA Italy reported that six wild swans tested positive for the H5N1 strain of avian influenza. The animals were among 22 dead found in the southern regions of Calabria, Apulia and Sicily. (*M&C News*)

> HUNGARY - AVIAN INFLUENZA The Hungarian authorities informed the European Commission of confirmed cases of the H5 avian influenza virus in three dead wild swans found in the county of Bács-Kiskun, in Southern Hungary. Samples from the dead birds are now being sent to the Community Reference Laboratory in Weybridge for further tests to determine whether this is the H5N1 strain. (*AnimalNet - EC press release*)

> HONG KONG - AVIAN INFLUENZA Two more birds in Hong Kong have tested positive for the H5N1 avian influenza strain. Fears are growing that Hong Kong is on the verge of a bird flu outbreak following the discovery of a total of eight dead birds with the virus in the past three weeks. The two latest cases were a chicken found in a busy new town street and a wild local species found in a school yard in the urban Mong Kok shopping area. (*AnimalNet - Agence France Presse*)

> IRAN - AVIAN INFLUENZA Iran's veterinary organization reported the first cases of the H5N1 strain of avian influenza in wild swans. Tested samples came from some wild swans in a flock of

135 that was found dead in wetlands near the Caspian Sea port of Bandar-e Anzali on Iran's northern coast, a wintering spot for many wildfowl from Russia. (*AnimalNet - Reuters*)

> SLOVENIA - AVIAN INFLUENZA Lab tests have confirmed that a swan found dead last week in northern Slovenia was infected with the H5N1 strain of avian influenza. It is the country's first case of avian influenza. The swan was found near the northern city of Maribor, 9 miles from the Austrian border. (*Meating Place*)

> JAPAN - NO BSE The 46 herd mates and offspring of a dairy cow, which was discovered last month to have died from BSE in a northern Japanese state, had not contracted the disease, despite eating the same tainted feed the victim had consumed. The herd mates were slaughtered last week, and their brains were tested for the disease; all tests returned negative findings. (*Meating Place*)

> US - ANIMAL ID The National Animal Movement Database, which will allow USDA health officials to trace an animal or group of animals back to their source quickly, was rolled out last week at the NCBA meeting. Database directors confirmed that the system is designed to be a single database for the nation. They also acknowledged that USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service officials have said recently they will work with multiple traceback systems, if that's what US agriculture wants. **ViaTrace**, the firm that developed the software needed for the system and the company that will operate the system, said that its database system is in use in some countries in Europe currently, so it is a "mature" system. (*CattleNetwork*)

> US - MASTITIS TREATMENT In trials at the USDA's ARS Bovine Functional Genomics Laboratory, scientists have showed that injecting the cows' mammary glands with the sugar Poly-x reduced mastitis infections at about one-twelfth the cost of antibiotics. The polysaccharide occurs naturally in the cell walls of certain yeasts. But when administered to nonlactating dairy cows, the polysaccharide mobilizes the animals' immune system. ARS has applied for patent protection on their yeast-sugar treatment. (*AVMA News Bytes*)

BRAKKE CONSULTING VIEWPOINT

The news this week is dominated by the continued outbreaks of avian influenza and BSE various international countries. Several of these stories are followed by the announcement of the US National Animal Movement Database. Hopefully, everyone is falling in line related to the need for the animal protein industry to be able to track the source and location of diseased animals. At the NCBA meeting a couple of weeks ago I was most impressed with the number of companies involved in providing some portion of the services needed to implement this system. The biggest concern might be that there are too many and confusion will occur at the producer level.

The first 6 weeks of 2006 are showing some very positive signs for the industry. Almost every company is expanding in the personnel area in anticipation of a strong sales year and new product introductions. As we've commented before the "stars" seem to be aligned to produce some solid revenue growth in 2006. The desire by private equity funds to invest in businesses in the animal industry remains strong, which is great for those considering selling.

Have a great weekend!! We look forward to seeing many of you at the Western Veterinary Conference in Las Vegas next week.

Ron Brakke

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