

## MINUTES

### LIVESTOCK & POULTRY FARM BILL WORKING GROUP

#### KENTUCKY FARM BUREAU FEDERATION

APRIL 5, 2017

The Kentucky Farm Bureau Livestock and Poultry Farm Bill Working Group met at the Kentucky Farm Bureau State Office in Louisville at 10:00 a.m. EST on Wednesday, April 5, 2017.

Working Group members present were: Jamie Guffey, Kentucky Poultry Federation, Chair; Fritz Giesecke, Kentucky Farm Bureau; Dr. Dennis Liptrap, Kentucky Pork Producers Association, Chuck Crutcher, Kentucky Cattleman's Association; and John McCauley, Kentucky Department of Agriculture. Also present were Gidget Cropper and Jacob Bowman, Kentucky Farm Service Agency. Damon Wells, National Turkey Federation joined the meeting via conference call. This meeting was staffed by Fran McCall and Ed McQueen, Kentucky Farm Bureau.

This meeting was called to order by Chairman Guffey and introductions were made. Mr. Guffey gave an overview of his recent trip to Washington D.C. with the Kentucky Agricultural Leadership Program (KALP) and the key topics that were discussed. Trade and expanding export markets continue to be key issues. Mr. Fritz Giesecke discussed the Brazilian market and expansion of U.S. exports to China.

Mr. John McCauley, Kentucky Department of Agriculture, gave a brief overview of Farm Bill programs. Seventy-nine percent of the Farm Bill budget goes for the nutrition program and there is no intention of splitting this from the other titles of the Farm Bill. Only 4.6% of Farm Bill spending goes to commodity programs (excludes crop insurance and conservation). He shared Commissioner of Agriculture Ryan Quarles' thoughts about the 21% proposed reduction in the USDA budget. Mr. McCauley also pointed out because of the delay in getting Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue confirmed, the 2018 Farm Bill appears to no longer be on a fast track.

Mr. McCauley highlighted KDA's Farm Bill and national legislative priorities; these include new & beginning farmers, succession planning, trade, crop insurance, and immigration reform. Concern over the way county crop yields are determined and the effect on ARC-CO payments was also discussed. County yield accuracy is reduced due to many farmers not participating in National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) surveys. Commissioner Quarles believes these payments should be based on Risk Management Agency (RMA) data, not NASS data. Mr. McCauley also talked about the need for multi-year H-2A contracts and a more streamlined H-2A program. The Hemp Pilot Program continues to be successful and should be renewed until Congress makes industrial hemp legal by removing its "controlled substance" status.

Mr. McCauley stressed the importance of Farm Bill livestock programs to livestock producers. Future efforts could focus on stopping fraud and abuse in the Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP) and increasing coverage for disasters like ice storms and other weather-related losses in poultry houses.

Next on the agenda was the Farm Bill Livestock and Conservation Program report from the Farm Service Agency (FSA). Ms. Cropper gave a detailed report on the Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP) under which \$3,445,008 was paid on 1,951 applications (not final data) in Kentucky. LIP provides benefits to livestock producers for livestock deaths in excess of normal mortality caused by adverse weather or by attacks by animals reintroduced into the wild by the federal government. FSA continues to deal with bad actors and with county committees having to review LIP applications and determine their legitimacy. The State FSA Committee handles all appeals.

Ms. Cropper then explained the Livestock Forage Program (LFP) and how three counties qualified in 2016 due their D4 drought status. LFP provides compensation to eligible livestock producers who have suffered grazing losses due to drought or fire on land that is native or improved pastureland with permanent vegetative cover or that is planted specifically for grazing. Grazing periods were extended to December 1 for those counties due to the drought.

Next, Ms. Cropper highlighted the Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees and Farm-Raised Fish Program (ELAP). ELAP provides emergency assistance to eligible producers of livestock, honeybees and farm-raised fish for losses due to disease (including cattle tick fever), adverse weather, or other conditions, such as blizzards and wildfires, not covered by LFP and LIP. In 2015, 22 applications were submitted and \$33,000 was paid out.

Mr. Bowman, FSA, discussed several conservation programs he works with including Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP), and Emergency Conservation Program (ECP). He pointed out there is a lot of paperwork with these programs, so having a local county FSA person available who can talk to land owners is very important to the success of these programs. The focus of CRP has broadened to include wildlife and environmental benefits.

Mr. Damon Wells with the National Turkey Federation joined the meeting via conference call to discuss a proposal for a new program called *Animal Disease and Disaster Prevention Program and National Livestock Vaccine Bank Overview*. The mission of this program is to enable the development and implementation of measures to prevent and mitigate the establishment and spread of animal pests and diseases, and to improve animal health, productivity, and competitiveness. This program is modeled after the Plant Pest and Disease Disaster Program and the 2014 Farm Bill's National Animal Health Laboratory Network. The program is needed because:

1. Emerging pests and disease have the potential to devastate our industry. For example, Avian Influenza, PED outbreak, Bovine Tuberculosis, Foot and Mouth Disease, etc.

2. Safeguard animal agriculture to sustain economic development and protect our nation's food supply.
3. Protect trade by management and prevention of potential outbreaks

Mr. Wells highlighted seven goal areas for the *Animal Disease and Disaster Prevention Program*:

1. Enhancing animal pest and disease analysis and survey
2. Targeting domestic inspection activities at vulnerable points in the safeguarding continuum
3. Enhancing and strengthening threat identification and technology
4. Safeguarding animal production
5. Improving biosecurity
6. Enhancing response and mitigation capacity
7. Conducting technology development; enhancing electronic sharing of animal health data for risk analysis between State and federal animal health officials; and outreach and education about these issues

Mr. Wells also discussed the need for a National Livestock Vaccine Bank. Sufficient amounts of animal vaccine, antiviral, and therapeutic products should be maintained to appropriately respond to the most damaging animal diseases affecting human health or the economy. The first priority is Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD).

Mr. Wells shared information on proposed funding of the program, the current APHIS budget (which has been flat), and possible funding in the 2018 Farm Bill. Historically, animal programs have received less USDA funding than crops despite their similar annual cash receipts. He pointed out that pest and disease threats to animal agriculture are real and imminent. Mr. Wells stated that development of a mechanism to prevent and mitigate animal agriculture disasters is important. Discretionary appropriations are not a viable option. Mandatory funding through the Farm Bill is a proven model. He asked for feedback from our associations and assistance on the seven goals outlined. Mr. Wells stressed that the time to act is now and it is critical that animal agriculture speak with one voice.

Chairman Jamie Guffey asked the question "where do we go from here?" The group identified the following priority items for livestock and poultry subgroup:

1. Continued funding for the Livestock Indemnity Program and Crop Insurance
2. Trade – funding for Foreign Market Development (FMD) and Market Access Program (MAP), and USDA filling the Under Secretary for Trade
3. Emphasis on beginning and young farmer programs
4. National Livestock Vaccine Bank
5. Research funding for land grant universities

Chairman Guffey will present these priority items at the Farm Bill meeting in Hopkinsville with Congressman Comer on behalf of the group. There being no further business to come before the committee, the meeting was adjourned.

**Recorded by: Fran McCall**  
**Kentucky Farm Bureau**