

## National Animal Health Monitoring System (NAHMS) to Study Goat Industry in 2009

In its first study of the U.S. goat industry, NAHMS will obtain baseline information about the U.S. goat population, including health issues, prevalence of certain diseases, and health and management practices. The study will focus primarily on the meat and dairy sectors of the goat industry.

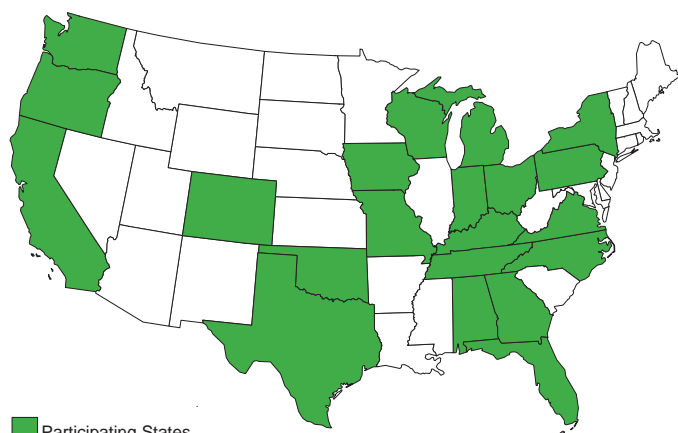
A unit of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), NAHMS was established in 1990 to conduct national studies on the health and management of the U.S. livestock, poultry, and aquaculture populations.

### NAHMS Goat 2009 Study

The NAHMS Goat 2009 study will address the priority issues of the U.S. goat industry and other stakeholders. These priority issues were developed from 1,264 responses to a needs-assessment questionnaire and input from meetings across the country with representatives of the goat industry.

Twenty-one of the major goat-producing States will participate in Goat 2009 (see map). These States represent 78.4 percent of U.S. goat operations and 85.3 percent of U.S. goats.

#### NAHMS Goat 2009 Study



■ Participating States



NAHMS, in collaboration with domestic and global partners, will address the following objectives in the Goat 2009 study.

- Determine producer awareness of Veterinary Services program diseases and describe management and biosecurity practices important for the control of infectious diseases (including brucellosis, scrapie, caprine arthritis encephalitis [CAE], Johne's disease, and caseous lymphadenitis). Provide a baseline description of animal health, nutrition, and management practices in the U.S. goat industry.
- Estimate the prevalence of
  - *Mycobacterium paratuberculosis* (Johne's disease) infection and
  - Internal parasitism and anthelmintic resistance.
- Characterize contagious ecthyma (sore mouth) in U.S. goats. Determine producer awareness of zoonotic potential and practices to prevent sore mouth transmission, and assess producer interest in an improved vaccine for sore mouth.
- Examine factors (e.g., genetic and management) that correlate with CAE virus levels.
- Provide genetic and serological banks for future research.

## Benefits to the Industry

By gathering reliable and valuable information on the U.S. goat industry, the Goat 2009 study will help to

- Educate the producers and veterinarians of tomorrow,
- Help policymakers and industry representatives make informed decisions,
- Measure the impacts of disease,
- Evaluate the potential impacts of diseases affecting both goats and humans,
- Assist researchers and private enterprises to identify and focus on vital issues related to goat health and productivity, and
- Conduct economic analyses of the health and productivity of the U.S. goat industry.

## Study Schedule

In the first phase of this study, representatives from USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service will contact randomly selected goat producers from July through mid-August 2009 to administer an on-site questionnaire.\* After voluntarily completing the questionnaire, producers will be asked to participate in the second phase of the study, which will include an additional questionnaire and optional biological sampling. Producers who choose to continue will be visited from September through December 2009 by veterinary medical officers and/or animal health technicians.

## Benefits to Participants

All goat producers who participate in the first phase of the study will receive reports and information sheets presenting the study results; these materials will enable each producer to compare his or her operation with other U.S. goat operations. Producers who complete the second questionnaire will receive additional reports, and those who also participate in the optional biological

sampling components of the second phase will receive the following benefits:

- Information about internal parasites in the herd and their resistance to anthelmintics, which could help improve deworming protocols;
- Sample results that will help producers evaluate whether their herd has Johne's disease; and/or
- Information on strain(s) of sore mouth present on the operation.

## Confidentiality

Because NAHMS' studies rely on voluntary participation, USDA-APHIS protects the privacy of every participant. Only those collecting the data know the identity of the respondent. No participant name or address is ever recorded in any APHIS database. No data will be reported on any individual or in a manner that would allow the identification of an individual.

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\*Operations with fewer than 10 goats at time of sample selection will follow a different process that will involve completing only a short questionnaire by mail or, if preferred, by follow-up telephone call. This process also is voluntary and strictly confidential.